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## CONTENTS

MALLARMÉ'S EDENS II, <i>A. R. Chisholm</i>	page 3
LA RELIGIEUSE, 1760-1780, <i>Nola M. Leov</i>	23
SYNTACTICAL AMBIGUITY IN HORACE AND VIRGIL, <i>Kenneth Quinn</i>	36
THE 'WISDOM' SEQUENCE IN BRENNAN'S POEMS, <i>G. A. Wilkes</i>	47
HÖLDERLIN'S HELLENISM, <i>L. J. Ryan</i>	51
BOOK REVIEWS	60
BOOKS RECEIVED	118
ASSOCIATION NEWS	120
INDEX	122

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## MALLARMÉ'S EDENS—II

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### III. HERODIADE AND A POETIC ABSOLUTE\*

#### I

THE Eden of perfection to which Mallarmé devoted his longest efforts was that of a poetic absolute: pure beauty, which transcends the act of living.

His sunset sonnets express this through a special symbol, which is seen at its best in 'Victorieusement fui . . .' The sun, a phoenix ever reborn, is not a symbol of personal immortality, but that of a supreme serenity; beauty, when it is great enough to be absolute, is timeless; so that sunset and sunrise are not death and resurrection respectively, but a reconciliation of life and death. And such a reconciliation is an absolute, an eternal stability behind the apparent mobility of a cycle.

Dr Gardner Davies, in *Mallarmé et le drame solaire* (Paris, Corti, 1959), argues, with a wealth of illustrations and exegeses, that Mallarmé considers it his task to reconstitute, intellectually, the beauty of the sun during the period of its absence: 'Les ténèbres viennent enfin engloutir la pourpre et les flammes, ne laissant subsister qu'une réminiscence purifiée par le feu de ses éléments

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\* Since writing, late in 1959, the first section of this study, I have read Professor Léon Cellier's *Mallarmé et la morte qui parle* (Paris, P.U.F., 1959), in which he too stresses the role played by Harriet Smyth in the poet's inner life. His explanation of this *hantise* is radically different from mine; but the coincidence shows that 'la morte qui parle' is by no means inaudible.—A.R.C.

matériels. Cette réminiscence abstraite, que Mallarmé appelle *Rêve* ou *Angoisse*, tourmente l'esprit du poète jusqu'au moment où il réussit à recréer intellectuellement la pourpre et les flammes disparues' (p. 38). To do this, Dr Davies affirms, the poet has to strip himself of personality. He has, in other words, to be a vessel of the absolute.

*Hérodiane*, which the poet apparently intended to include in his never-finished 'Grand Œuvre', is in my opinion the greatest and most beautiful fragment of the poetic absolute envisaged by Mallarmé. It is only a fragment, even now; and students of my generation realise only too well how far this fragmentary character of a poem can mislead us. For there was a stage when we knew only the *Scène* and the *Cantique de saint Jean*; and the publication by Dr Bonniot, in 1926, of the *Ouverture ancienne* was not only a dazzling revelation to us, but a reversal of many of our earlier ideas with regard to *Hérodiane*. If I may here interpolate a personal note, I add that I conceived my early book, *Towards Hérodiane* (1934), in this moment of mingled delight and disturbance. To some of these early conclusions I remain faithful, while frankly admitting that others have since been rendered obsolete by the publication of various Mallarmé texts and documents, including the invaluable *Œuvres complètes* edited by Dr Henri Mondor and M. Jean-Aubry. Moreover, many excellent studies and exegeses have since appeared; and in particular, Professor L. J. Austin's study, 'Le *Cantique de saint Jean* de Stéphane Mallarmé' in AUMLA No. 10, May, 1959, has cleared up many points that had hitherto baffled me.

Recently, Dr Gardner Davies has compelled us to open the question of *Hérodiane* once more, by his publication of *Les Noces d'Hérodiane. Mystère* (Paris, Gallimard, 1959). This fascinating volume gives, in addition to the three earlier pieces (*Ouverture ancienne*, *Scène* and *Cantique*), a series of further fragments, with many variants, followed by numerous notes made at various times by Mallarmé during the long years in which he was, with interruptions, thinking about *Hérodiane*.

The three well-known pieces were, it appears, three parts of a *Mystère* that was to consist of several parts, namely, says Dr Davies (p. 21): 'Un *Prélude*, remplaçant l'*Ouverture ancienne*; la *Scène* dialoguée, où le poète évoque la personnalité de son héroïne; la *Scène intermédiaire*, à la fin de laquelle *Hérodiane* demande la tête du Précurseur; le *Cantique de saint Jean*, hymne entonné par le saint au moment de son supplice; un dernier *Monologue*, exposant le 'pourquoi de la crise'; et un *Finale*'.

Though some disagreement with the order in which Dr Gardner

Davies places these various parts will probably be inevitable, it seems to me that it is substantially correct.

What are we to understand by the title: *Les Noces d'Hérodiade*? The statement made by Robert de Montesquiou in 1921 is now well known. Writing before the publication of *l'Ouverture ancienne*, he said of the *Scène*: 'Elle ébauche le secret, lequel, je le tiens du poète lui-même, n'est autre que la future violation du mystère de son être (i.e. that of Hérodiade) par un regard de saint Jean qui va l'apercevoir, et payer de la mort ce seul sacrilège'. For my part, I find this explanation a little too melodramatic, and prefer Dr Davies' theory (p. 40): 'Hérodiade se sentirait comme violée par un regard de saint Jean l'apercevant au passage? Il nous paraît plus vraisemblable que Mallarmé attribuait cette altération des sentiments narcissistes de la vierge à une rencontre purement spirituelle avec le Précurseur dont elle ignore encore les traits au moment de réclamer sa tête'.

Whether we take the *Ouverture ancienne* or the fragmentary *Prélude* as the beginning of the poem (I prefer to keep the *Ouverture ancienne*, which is more poetic, modifying it by references to the *Prélude* fragments), it seems to me that the general scheme of *Les Noces* was this:

1. The nurse foresees in the dawn the portents of a tragic day, without quite knowing what they are (*Ouverture ancienne* and *Prélude*);

2. Her uneasiness increases during her dialogue with Hérodiade (*Scène*), in which she foresees a deviation from what she considers the normal destiny—marriage—of a young woman;

3. Hérodiade demands the head of Saint John on a charger. Why? This needs ample discussion, and we shall return to it presently (*Scène intermédiaire* and *Cantique*);

4. She then realises (other fragments) that she and the Baptist are mysteriously bound together; mystic union with the saint is the only 'marriage' that will not violate her absoluteness.

The above is, of course, an over-simplification, made solely for the purpose of providing a starting-point for a fuller discussion. We must remember that Mallarmé's intention was not to make his *Mystère* discursive or popular. In the letter (October, 1864) in which he announced his general plan to Henri Cazalis, he wrote: 'J'invente une langue qui doit nécessairement jaillir d'une poétique très nouvelle, que je pourrais définir en ces deux mots: *Peindre non la chose, mais l'effet qu'elle produit*. Le vers ne doit donc pas, là, se composer de mots, mais d'intentions, et toutes les paroles s'effacer devant les sensations'. The last phrase obviously



means that atmosphere, not events, is to be created by the incantatory power of words and word-melody.

2

The *Ouverture ancienne* illustrates this intention in masterly fashion. It is an overture in the musical sense; that is to say that it evokes the *décor* of the drama, and hints at its action, by means of allusions, atmosphere, echoes, arabesques of suggestion, repetitions in different keys. The nurse who intones it is a larger figure here than in the *Scène*, where she seems persistently to misunderstand Hérodiade. She has at times the proportions of a sibyl, remembering an almost infinite past and a splendour that is now reaching its end:

Ombre magicienne aux symboliques charmes!  
 Une voix, du passé longue évocation,  
 Est-ce la mienne prête à l'incantation?  
 Encore dans les plis jaunes de la pensée  
 Traînant, antique, ainsi qu'une étoile encensée  
 Sur un confus amas d'ostensoirs refroidis,  
 Par les trous anciens et par les plis roidis  
 Percés selon le rythme et les dentelles pures  
 Du suaire laissant par ses belles guipures  
 Désespéré monter le vieil éclat voilé  
 S'élève: (ô quel lointain en ces appels célé!)  
 Le vieil éclat voilé du vermeil insolite,  
 De la voix languissant, nulle, sans acolyte,  
 Jettera-t-il son or par dernières splendeurs,  
 Elle, encore, l'antienne aux versets demandeurs,  
 A l'heure d'agonie et de luttes funèbres!

The overture of an opera has precisely that sort of enlargement: it soars high above the ensuing action, soars and dreams and floats away. Moreover, all that the nurse chants is prophetic. Her long insistence on the redness of dawn and the desolation that dawn reveals is a musical magnification of the tragedy that is to be enacted later in the *Cantique de saint Jean*. In the latter, the cosmos is almost pure geometry; in the *Ouverture* it is an ocean of presages, forebodings, desolation:

Abolie, et son aile affreuse dans les larmes  
 Du bassin, aboli, qui mire les alarmes,  
 Des ors nus fustigeant l'espace cramoisi,  
 Une Aurore a, plumage héraldique, choisi



Notre tour cinéraire et sacrificatrice,  
 Lourde tombe qu'a fuie un bel oiseau, caprice  
 Solitaire d'aurore au vain plumage noir . . .  
 Ah! des pays déchus et tristes le manoir!  
 Pas de clapotement! L'eau morne se résigne,  
 Que ne visite plus la plume ni le cygne  
 Inoubliable: l'eau reflète l'abandon  
 De l'automne éteignant en elle son brandon.

And just as a musical overture dimly suggests, or echoes in advance, some of the dramatic 'events', so too, in the lines quoted above, we foresee several of the details that we shall find in the *Scène*. Compare, for example, 'Notre tour cinéraire et sacrificatrice' (*Ouv. anc.*) and 'Un jour/Qui ne finira pas sans malheur sur la tour' (*Scène*).

Whether Mallarmé intended or not, at one time, to substitute the two pieces in the *Prélude* (Davies, *Noces d'H.*, pp. 55 and 59) for this *Ouverture*, the latter is undoubtedly more beautiful, elusive and suggestive. There is, in the *Prélude* fragments, an over-insistence on the role to be played by the charger. Thus, in the first fragment:

Cette pièce héréditaire de dressoir  
 .  
 La chimère au rebut d'une illustre vaisselle  
 Maintenant mal éteinte  
 .  
 Cette vacuité louche et muette d'un plat.

And in the second fragment:

Plus abominé mais placide ambassadeur  
 Le circonstantiel plat nu dans sa splendeur,  
 Toute ambiguïté par ce bord muet fuie,  
 Se fourbit, on dirait, s'époussette ou s'essuie.

In other words, the *Prélude* fragments are too much a part of the action. How much more Mallarmean and suggestive are the lines in the *Ouverture*, quoted above, beginning with 'Ombre magicienne', where the charger is not only a dim suggestion, but is hidden away among other evocations of ancient vessels: 'Ostensoirs refroidis . . . vieil éclat voilé . . . vermeil insolite'. That is infinitely more like a musical overture, where the sound of a particular instrument, say a flute or an oboe, intended to convey a particular suggestion, is hidden away among the sounds of many other instruments, and yet emerges, strengthened by its very submersion.

The nurse in the *Ouverture ancienne* is, as I have said, a larger

figure than she is in the *Scène*. She is, in fact, life itself, but a life grown old: hence her insistence on the ancient days, the decay and the memories about her. And she had suckled Hérodiade, passing life on to her: hence the antagonisms in the *Scène*, where Hérodiade shuns life *because* it grows old. She wants only the absolute moment which is youth and beauty. Mallarmé provides a gloss for this, I think, in one of his fragmentary notes: 'la vieille qu'elle bannit est tout l'intervalle de vie'—with an asterisk after 'vie' and this footnote: 'la vieillesse' etc. (*Noces d'H.* p. 124).

Another note makes it clear that, although the nurse may have foreseen a marriage, she had no knowledge of, or connection with, the mystic alliance which is the subject of *Les Noces d'Hérodiade*. Mallarmé writes: 'la pauvre compagne pas du tout entremetteuse qui n'avait jamais songé à de telles noces' (*Noces d'H.* p. 128). She had, as an ancient exemplification of life, been thinking of marriage only in the orthodox sense: as a stage on the way from youth to maturity, from maturity to old age.

### 3.

There is little need to discuss, exegetically, the *Scène*, analyses of which go back to a period long before the publication of the *Ouverture ancienne*; and Hérodiade's 'pur regard de diamant', her hieratic attitudes (recalling those of Salammô), her monologue in front of her mirror, are familiar to all admirers of Mallarmé. For the purposes of the present argument it is enough to call attention to Hérodiade's closing remarks in the *Scène*:

J'attends une chose inconnue  
Ou peut-être, ignorant le mystère et vos cris,  
Jetez-vous les sanglots suprêmes et meurtris  
D'une enfance sentant parmi les rêveries  
Se séparer, enfin ses froides pierreries.

With the light thrown upon it by the publication of *Les Noces d'Hérodiade*, this passage takes on a new meaning. The hitherto inexorably virginal Hérodiade is disturbed by the thought that passion is about to tempt her after all. And here, I think, we have the answer to the question that I left open in my preliminary sketch of the *Noces*: Why does Hérodiade ask for Saint John's head on a charger?

Princess as she is, hermetic and aloof and infinitely proud, the one man who has at last exercised a mysterious but irresistible influence over her is (of all people!) the haggard prophet who had cried in the wilderness and whose voice has been issuing, like a

voice of doom, from his dungeon. What follows is a curious reversal of a somewhat similar situation in Stendhal's *Le Rouge et le Noir*. The haughty Mathilde, proud of her ancestry, is seduced by (of all people!) Julien Sorel, the penurious son of a sawmillier. She succumbs, and hates him; succumbs again, and perhaps there is still resentment in her passion. After Julien's execution she obtains his head from the executioner; but it is not merely for love of him: it is the repetition of a gesture that she had always admired, one of her remote ancestresses having committed the same atrocious act. Obtaining Julien's head is thus a supreme piece of egotism. . . Hérodiade, haughtier still than Mathilde, with a more illustrious ancestry, attracted by an even stranger figure, vindicates her hermetic egotism by committing the same awful act as Mathilde—but *in advance*. She has the prophet executed and has his head handed to her on a golden dish. Thus at last she can love him, for the eyes that might have seen her virginal beauty are sightless. It is the love of an Absolute (Hérodiade's virginal and self-sufficient beauty) for another Absolute (the Baptist's identification, through martyrdom, with his pure Idea). Such is, as part of the *Finale* puts it, the 'Hymen froid d'une enfance avec l'affreux génie' (*Noces d'H.* p. 78).

Her fearful act, her self-preservation, her atrociously purified passion, are like (yet unlike) Mathilde's final act. Here is a piece of egotism so implacable that it becomes impersonal, superhuman, absolute.

Both Hérodiade and Saint John are emancipated from time, from the 'vieillesse' of living that Hérodiade had seen in the nurse. The eternal is not a multiplication of moments: it is one timeless moment. Hérodiade's timeless moment is that in which she solves the insistent problem of puberty without any carnal act. The Saint's timeless moment is that in which, even as the sword is separating his head from his body, he sees the light of eternity:

Et ma tête surgie  
Solitaire vigie  
Dans les vols triomphaux  
De cette faux  
Comme rupture franche  
Plutôt refoule ou tranche  
Les anciens désaccords  
Avec le corps  
Qu'elle de jeûnes ivre  
S'opiniâtre à suivre  
En quelque bond hagard  
Son pur regard.



He is satisfied with one brief glimpse of the eternal. He does not persist in the pursuit of this glimpse. What is more important ('plutôt') than such perpetuation is that his spirit ('tête') has been set free from its old discordances with the flesh.

4.

I have called this implacable third Eden a *poetic* absolute; and it is perhaps necessary to vindicate this adjective. Poetry, rather than a 'coup de dés', is for Mallarmé (or for one of the several Mallarmés that inhabit his mind) the one thing that can abolish hazard, as he says in *Crise de vers*: 'Une ordonnance du livre de vers poind innée ou partout, élimine le hasard'. And to eliminate hazard is to attain the Absolute, of which the phenomenal world is a hazardous correspondence. But we live in this phenomenal world; and thus a poet is obliged to use his environment as a means of ascent: his imagery is necessarily taken from what he sees with his mortal eyes. The best he can do, then, is to balance these fragments of beauty one with another, even at a distance, even when they are placed in different parts of a poem: 'Des motifs de même jeu s'équilibreront, balancés, à distance' (same passage of *Crise de vers*).

When he wrote those lines he was thinking, as the context shows, of his contemplated 'Grand Œuvre', of which *Hérodiade* was to be only a part. But in order to achieve real equilibrium, there must be the same balance in the parts as in the whole, and so *Hérodiade* is self-contained, like its heroine. Its inner balance is ensured by such correspondences as we have noticed between the *Ouverture ancienne* and the *Scène*; between the *Scène* and the *Cantique*; between the *Cantique* and what was (as shown in the fragments published by Dr Davies) to follow. The balances and correspondences are veiled, of course; for by becoming too apparent they would be mere collocations of phenomenal realities. There is such a mass of imagery that it ceases to be imagery: it is a veil of appearances behind which we divine the Absolute.

Thus, perhaps, in *Hérodiade*, if Mallarmé had lived to complete it, there would have been the same sort of beauty as we find in pure music, where no image is allowed to become manifest, no chord independent. As we listen, we are carried on towards something that lies beyond the music, and yet is in it; towards something that we shall never attain, and which yet beckons to us as we listen. *Hérodiade*, like music, is an incantation; a stairway to the Absolute, a mass of suggestions and echoes so cunningly interwoven that they rule out hazard, and, though fragmentary, are a

potential whole. And this whole is summed up in the title, *Les Noces d'Hérodiade*: a mystic marriage between the perfect though momentary beauty of youth and the momentary but perfect mastery of genius. Such a marriage is poetry. It is also a poetic absolute.

Moreover, it is a union between life (Hérodiade) and death (the head on the charger); and thus there is a consistent affinity between Mallarmé's first Eden and his third. For in the first a mystic union perpetuates the memory of Harriet:

Nous fûmes deux, je le maintiens,

says the poet in *Prose pour des Esseintes*; meaning, no doubt, by the second phrase: 'I, still living, maintain this sweet duality'. Anima lives on in Animus. And in *Les Noces d'Hérodiade*, Animus lives on in Anima.

#### IV. TOWARDS THE 'GRAND ŒUVRE'

In *Hérodiade* Mallarmé went as far as it was possible to go, *poetically*, towards the Absolute. In *Igitur* and *Un Coup de Dés* I have the impression that he strains poetry almost to its breaking point; and this process is clearly discernible in the former, in which only certain sections (notably *Le Minuit* and the second of the *Ebauches de la sortie de la chambre*, marked with a Greek delta in the manuscript) strike me as being intrinsically poetic. In the *Coup de Dés*, although there is an important aesthetic intention and much artistic ingenuity, I find little real poetry. Where are the inner melodies, the haunting suggestions, the union of thought and music, that we recognise in *Hérodiade*? At most there is a poetic or musical *scheme*, set out by means of typographical variations.

In both these poems we find a very strange Eden, in which the idea of perfection is reduced almost to nothingness. What happens here is that Massillon's 'Dieu seul est grand' is transformed, as it were, into 'Dieu seul *est*'; there is nothing else but God, and therefore God is nothing. It is a *De profundis* without a *clamavi*; or, in *Un Coup de Dés*, a *De profundis creavi*, but what is created is still, at most, a hazard competing with Hazard, a man-made 'constellation' winning a place for itself beside the fortuitous swarming of the stars.

##### 1.

It is impossible, with what is known at present about Mallarmé's papers, to say what the real text of *Igitur* is. We have only the

drafts in the *Œuvres complètes* (Mondor et Jean-Aubry), set out in an order determined by Dr Edmond Bonniot, Mallarmé's son-in-law. While not quarrelling with this order (we owe Dr Bonniot gratitude rather than reproach), I find some curious discrepancies. For example, in the 'Argument' which Dr Bonniot places at the beginning, the poet mentions four sections; but the Bonniot text includes a fifth (*Vie d'Igitur*), about which the editor himself has some doubts, and which seems to me to be a gloss rather than a definitive text.

Another anomaly is that the *Vie d'Igitur*, though only a gloss or scheme rather than an integral part of the poem, provides a more lucid and detailed Argument than the short draft which Dr Bonniot classes as the 'Argument' (p. 434. Numerals in brackets henceforth refer to the *Œuvres complètes*).

Indeed, I find the *Vie d'Igitur* the best place in which to examine Mallarmé's main intentions in writing *Igitur*. In it, the poet actually begins the second section with the words: 'Voici en somme Igitur'. He goes on to say:

Igitur, depuis que son Idée a été complétée: —le passé compris de sa race qui pèse sur lui en sensation de fini, l'heure de la pendule précipitant cet ennui en temps lourd, étouffant, et son attente de l'accomplissement du futur, forment du temps pur, ou de l'ennui, rendu instable par la maladie d'idéalité: cet ennui, ne pouvant être, redevient ses éléments, tantôt, tous les meubles fermés, et pleins de leur secret; et Igitur comme menacé par le supplice d'être éternel qu'il pressent vaguement, se cherchant dans la glace devenue ennui et se voyant vague et près de disparaître comme s'il allait s'évanouir en le temps, puis s'évoquant; puis lorsque de tout cet ennui, temps, il s'est refait, voyant la glace horriblement nulle, s'y voyant entouré d'une raréfaction, absence d'atmosphère, et les meubles, tordre leurs chimères dans le vide, et les rideaux frissonner invisiblement, inquiets; alors, il ouvre les meubles pour qu'ils versent leur mystère, l'inconnu, leur mémoire, leur silence, facultés et impressions humaines, — et quand il croit être redevenu lui, il fixe de son âme l'horloge, dont l'heure disparaît par la glace, ou va s'enfouir dans les rideaux, en trop plein, ne le laissant même pas à l'ennui qu'il implore et rêve. Impuissant de l'ennui.

If we study this passage carefully, we shall be well on the way towards a general exegesis of the poem. (Here and in what follows, the reader is referred to the Appendix for the definition of Mallarmé's more puzzling terms.)

Igitur is painfully conscious of the generations that have preceded him, giving him the inescapable feeling ('sensation') that he is the end ('fini') of a long series. He wishes to be *himself*, an



absolute; but an absolute cannot belong to time, which is inseparable from change. Time is Becoming, not Being. Moreover, as the latest term in a series, which belongs to the progression of time, he is forced to accept the idea of a future, a continuation: 'l'accomplissement du futur'. He is thus condemned to wait, and the clock piles up the hours, making this 'temps lourd' of his waiting an 'ennui'.

This time of 'ennui' (very like 'l'exil' in 'Le vierge, le vivace . . .') combined with race-memories, nevertheless gives him a sense of living in 'du temps pur'—time devoid of happenings. Such 'pure' time might be an absolute in itself; but it is marred by the 'maladie d'idéalité'; that is to say, by Igitur's irresistible urge to think about himself and his race and to draw general conclusions from his thoughts—a 'malady' from the point of view of the Absolute, for it involves memory and, therefore, a time-series.

The result is that the 'temps pur, ou de l'ennui', cannot *be* ('ne pouvant être'): it is a time of waiting, and thus a potential becoming. And a becoming can always be split up into its various elements ('cet ennui . . . redevient ses éléments'). One of these elements is Igitur's ancestral home, with 'tous les meubles fermés'. And as a past implies a future, it looks as if the race will go on and on, and Igitur thus feels 'menacé par le supplice d'être éternel'.

Looking for his true, timeless, independent ego in the mirror of pure time, or ennui, he sees only a dim self, on the point of disappearing, not into death, but into the past and the future. He is still in the domain of Becoming, not Being. Then, when he has refound his own self, he discovers that a self without a past or a future would be void ('voyant la glace horriblement nulle'). Void also is the past; his ancestors mean nothing; their dreams and secrets, hidden away in the furniture, are nothing; and the curtains (see Appendix), saturated with time, quiver uneasily, as if they too were nothing.

Completing a vicious circle, he opens the old chests and cupboards, seeks out their mystery and their memories, all the humanity with which they are impregnated. Then, looking at the clock, he sees that the hour which it had recorded has already disappeared in the mirror of ennui, or been absorbed by the curtains (time). Nothing is left, not even pure time, which, by Mallarmé's definition, is ennui. Ennui has thus given him nothing, taken him no further on the road towards an absolute, towards independent being. He is simply an 'impuissant de l'ennui'.

The section of the *Vie d'Igitur* that follows ('Il se sépare' etc., p. 440-441) is obviously another draft of the passage we have just

examined—a further proof that the *Vie d'Igitur* is not part of the definitive text.

The section quoted above leaves only one conclusion to be drawn (and Mallarmé draws it in the last part of his poem. *Il se couche au tombeau*). The conscious self cannot be made independent. The time-series to which Igitur is bound by his heritage cannot give an absolute. The only Absolute is Nirvana. And that is why, in *Il se couche au tombeau*, Igitur drinks 'la goutte de néant qui manque à la mer'. This does not mean, of course, that he poisons himself! He simply accepts the idea that death and oblivion are the only Absolute. And 'la goutte de néant' cannot come from the sea, whose restlessness classes it as one of the elements of time and becoming. It comes only from implacable thinking.

2.

The argument that is set out in the *Vie d'Igitur* is elaborated in the poem, which in my opinion consists of four parts:

- I. *Le Minuit* (pp. 435-436);
- II. The *Ebauche* marked with a delta (pp. 447-449);
- III. *Le coup de dés* (pp. 441-442);
- IV. *Il se couche au tombeau* (p. 443).

I substitute the delta *Ebauche* for the second of the Bonniot texts because it is much less intricate and very much more poetic (and who can say whether Mallarmé intended to give definitive preference to the second of the Bonniot texts?)

*Le Minuit* is almost certainly the definitive exordium of *Igitur*, and is an elaboration of the opening section of the *Vie d'Igitur*. The title is significant: Midnight is, theoretically, a pause between a night and a new day, and is therefore a temporary cessation of the cosmic time-cycle. It is thus an appropriate moment for seeking the Absolute, which also is timeless.

Two details found in *Le Minuit* but not in the *Vie d'Igitur* are: 'la pâleur d'un livre ouvert que présente la table'; and a reminiscence of Igitur's earlier forecast of this hour: 'J'étais l'heure qui doit me rendre pur' (p. 435). The 'paleness' of the open book (see 'Livre' and 'Grimoire' in the Appendix) suggests a blank page in the family's chronicle which Igitur, desirous of living in his own right, abstains from filling. The prediction of this 'absolute' hour is actually inimical to the Absolute, for it carries Igitur back into the past, and thus keeps him in the bonds of time. This inner antinomy becomes evident throughout the poem, but is sometimes

only briefly suggested by such terms as 'équivoque' and 'ambiguïté'.

The most beautiful part of *Le Minuit* is in the two opening sections, where Mallarmé brings out the difference between the absolute splendour of midnight and the specious glitter of the stars, reflected in the sea: one *néant* mirroring another (as in Leconte de Lisle's *Sacra Fames*):

Son or (the golden memory of the midnight chime) allait feindre en l'absence un joyau nul de rêverie, riche et inutile survivance, sinon que sur la complexité marine et stellaire d'une orfèvrerie se lisait le hasard infini des conjonctions.

Révéléateur du minuit, il (i.e. 'son or') n'a jamais alors indiqué pareille conjoncture, car voici l'unique heure qu'il ait créée; et que de l'infini se séparent et les constellations et la mer, demeurées, en l'extériorité, de réciproques néants, pour en laisser l'essence, à l'heure unie, faire le présent absolu des choses (p. 435).

The delta *Ebauche* is, mainly, a beautiful evocation of Night, as compared with an individual night (see 'Nuit' in Appendix). The Night is a true absolute, vindicating its purity despite the intrusive presence of Igitur and his thoughts, which seem to trouble it for a moment—but only for a moment—by a contagion of anxiety. The ticking of the clock, the beating of Igitur's heart (pictured in great detail in *Le Minuit*) are absorbed into Night's own timeless rhythm: 'Elle entendit son propre cœur qui battit' (p. 448). And Night, by absorption in itself, gets rid of even the 'génies supérieurs'. The latter appear to be those rare thinkers who realise the futility of thought and yet weave their own web of ideas and imaginings and generalisations. They are easily absorbed by Night, because they really belong to it: they are correspondences of Night's absolute.

This definition of 'génies supérieurs' is of course symbolically suggested in the text, not explicitly stated. Their substantiality is depicted as a velvet bust—the stuff of Night itself. Over this dark bust, thought shimmers like a mere weft of lace: 'Il n'y avait d'autre toile arachnéenne que la dentelle sur ce buste' (p. 449).

And this lace is of no more significance than the specious gleaming of the stars: Night has her own splendour: 'Elle était libre enfin, sûre d'elle-même et débarrassée de tout ce qui était étranger à elle. En effet, le bruit cessa, en la lumière qui demeura seule et pure' (p. 449).

The Bonniot text of *Il quitte la chambre*, for which I have substituted the delta *Ebauche*, gives a much more detailed—and even crowded—picture of Igitur meditating in the night. And at the



end it has an extraordinarily interesting amplification of the 'goutte de néant qui manque à la mer', mentioned in *Il se couche au tombeau* (p. 443). It is:

Sur les meubles vacants, le Rêve a agonisé en cette fiole de verre, pureté, qui renferme la substance du Néant (p. 439).

This has a striking affinity with the most puzzling quatrain in *Ses purs ongles*:

Sur les crédences, au salon vide: nul ptyx,  
Aboli bibelot d'inanité sonore,  
(Car le Maître est allé puiser des pleurs au Styx  
Avec ce seul objet dont le Néant s'honore).

In the sonnet, as in *Igitur*, a Dream—many a dream—has died; and the 'aboli bibelot d'inanité sonore' is curiously reminiscent of the 'fiole de verre' which contains—nothingness. The phial is surely an 'objet dont le Néant s'honore'. These parallels may possibly explain why, in the sonnet, the Master has gone to 'puiser des pleurs au Styx'. The sea, as I remarked earlier, is not a symbol of the *Néant*, for its restlessness belongs to time. But the Styx, the River of Death, can and does (if we accept Mallarmé's philosophy) supply a 'goutte de néant'. The average human being sees the Styx, death, as a river of tears. But not so an *Igitur*. For him, despairing of a human absolute, death is the only Absolute, and Night is its visible symbol.

For me, the most puzzling section of *Igitur* is the one entitled *Le Coup de Dés* (which foreshadows the later poem, *Un Coup de Dés*. It revives the prophecy mentioned in other parts of the poem. What had the family expected *Igitur* to do? What prophecy was he to fulfil by a throw of the dice?

In his own meditations on this question, *Igitur* 'reprend la Folie' and 'admet l'acte'; and I take it that 'acte' (see Appendix) means the act of living, an individual, self-conscious life. But if he admits the reality of an individual existence, he must admit also the reality of repeated existence, the reality of his race. That is to say, using Mallarmé's special terminology, that if he admits the act, he must also admit the Act. And the Act has 'nié le hasard' (p. 441): human continuity is a challenge to the destructive power of time.

Now, did the prophecy mean that *Igitur* was, as the latest representative of his race, incorporating all its ideas, destined to provide an intellectual *proof* that humanity is real, indestructible, an absolute? Was it to be a proof with all the rigour of a mathematical formula? (*Igitur*, apostrophising his ancestors, rather scornfully, says in the "Argument"—p. 434—"Vous, mathématiciens, expi-

râtes'). Was it for this reason that his mother forbade him (*Ebauche IV*, p. 450), as a child, to go down ('à cheval sur la rampe', p. 436) and *play* among the ancestral tombs, as if they were not to be taken seriously? Was it his destiny to complete the ancestral *grimoire* and transform it into a 'Grand Œuvre' that would transcend time?

I think that the answer to all or most of these questions is probably in the affirmative. But *Igitur*, having realised that he himself cannot be an absolute, decides that such a possibility is denied to his race also, and to all humanity (Mallarmé is here almost anticipating the modern Existentialist theory). And for him, any thought, or system of thought, that tries to prove the contrary is only a throw of the dice (cf. the concluding line of *Un Coup de Dés*: 'Toute Pensée émet un Coup de Dés').

This interpretation would, I imagine, explain the curious note in italics at the head of Section IV in the Bonniot text: '*Le Cornet est la Corne de licorne—d'unicorne*', which could mean: Any proof of humanity's lasting reality is personal, singular, like a unicorn's horn; it is an individual's throw of the dice (the word-play of *cornet* and *corne* is of course lost in English). A theory of reality is, like a throw of the dice, a facile way out of a philosophical dilemma—which, like all dilemmas, has *two* horns.

In the end, *Igitur* actually prepares to throw the dice, but without conviction: '*Igitur secoue simplement les dés—avant d'aller rejoindre les cendres, atomes de ses ancêtres*' (p. 442). In a marginal note Mallarmé indicates that the expected throw was to be a 12: '*Si je compte, comédien, jouer le tour—les 12*'. Twelve: that is, no doubt, a reminiscence of *Le Minuit* and the special signification of Midnight: a suspension of time's cycle.

To sum up: the implication of *Igitur* seems to be that neither the individual, nor the immemorial collectivity constituting a race (or humanity), can claim the privilege of Being. Individual and race are both products of Chance. Being is pure—and therefore empty. The *Néant* is the only Absolute.

What justification is there, then, for art? I presume that for Mallarmé, at this stage, art is like the images with which *Igitur* fills the night and peoples the room in which he is meditating. It is a progression towards that final purity of thought which sees Nirvana as the only perfection, the only escape from Becoming, the supreme term of all correspondences.

### 3.

I shall not undertake an exegesis of *Un Coup de Dés*, for two reasons. In the first place, it would have to be so lengthy that it

would obscure the argument of the present monograph; and secondly, I have already published a 'working' exegesis of this poem in the initial number of AUMLA.

It must suffice for the present to say that the 'Master' in *Un Coup de Dés* is an Igitur grown much older and having, therefore, a greater wealth of experience. His 'story' is told in a long poem which consists of a tapestry of themes and sub-themes, each major thread of the tapestry being made recognisable by means of special typography.

The main theme, in very large capitals, runs through the greater part of the poem: UN COUP DE DES . . . JAMAIS . . . N'ABOLIRA . . . LE HASARD. Another major theme, the most important of all from the point of view of the present study, is similarly scattered through the poem, in smaller (but still quite large) capitals, and concludes with the words: RIEN . . . N'AURA EU LIEU . . . QUE LE LIEU . . . EXCEPTÉ . . . PEUT-ETRE . . . UNE CONSTELLATION. And as this theme ends on the last page of *Un Coup de Dés*, it can be assumed that it is intended to be a counter-balance to the inexorable main theme.

'Le lieu' apparently means the background (hazard) on which the Master's striving has taken place. When he, like other great intelligences, has succumbed, nothing remains: life is futile. And yet ('excepté . . . peut-être') something perhaps does remain. What is it? It is a human constellation, different from the stars, which are only the products of Chance, like the 'feux vils' of the sonnet 'Quand l'ombre menaça'. outshone by the genius of 'un astre en fête'.

This constellation is 'froide d'oubli et de désuétude' (p. 477), because it represents the efforts of gifted thinkers and creators throughout the centuries, efforts that are ignored or neglected by the common herd. And yet it

. . . énumère  
sur quelque surface vacante et supérieure  
le heurt successif  
sidéralement  
d'un compte total en formation.

This 'compte total' is, I think, the sum of superior human thought, the thought of the 'génies' in *Igitur*. At the stage where he was sketching *Igitur*, Mallarmé looked on all this cerebration as a mere 'travail arachnéen d'une dentelle' (p. 447); but this fragile lace-work is now considered as at least equal to the tapestry of the stars, shining on the velvet background of Night.

This human constellation of thought must some day end. But



while it lasts, it can successfully compete with Chance, defying the ultimate conqueror, defying the undeniabes, Chance and Mortality.

And so, even if (last line of *Un Coup de Dés*) 'toute Pensée émet un Coup de Dés' and nothing more, the dice are worth throwing, the act of creative thought is the one thing that is really worth while.

4.

Despite their negative character, both *Igitur* and *Un Coup de Dés* have a rich aesthetic significance. Intrinsically, they are not highly poetical; but they probably form a major part of Mallarmé's projected 'Grand Œuvre', and constitute his ultimate *ars poetica*. Their underlying meaning is that life has no sense, being merely a spark in the everlasting Night; but that it is still worth while if it is devoted to thought, to art.

For art, considered from the Symbolist point of view, rarefies phenomena to a point where they begin to merge into the Absolute. And even if this Absolute is nothingness, and is inescapable, it is better to prepare for it by intense artistic and intellectual activity than to be carried towards it in blind unwillingness. As Valéry puts it, the reward for intellectuality is 'un long regard sur le calme des dieux'. In the case of the real artist, as seen by Mallarmé, life is a preparation for death and therefore a refusal to be demoralised by the thought of mortality.

We shall, almost certainly, never know how much further Mallarmé intended to elaborate his theory in the 'Grand Œuvre'. For my own part, I can only imagine that, just as *Igitur* was expected to provide an emancipating *summa* of the thought of his ancestors, so too Mallarmé hoped to make a *summa* of his own poetry and of the doctrines on which it was based. Perhaps *Un Coup de Dés* was only the scheme of this *summa*; perhaps the *summa* would have put flesh on to this schematic skeleton and transformed it into a poem comparable with, and even surpassing, *Hérodiade*.

In any case, I am not sure that we have been wholly deprived of this *summa*. We can make it for ourselves by a careful study of his works, which are singularly consistent. All his *Edens* correspond to each other, and their sum is Nirvana—a Nirvana which can be divided into its poetic correspondences, like the *ennui* in *Vie d'Igitur*, which (p. 440) 'redevient ses éléments'.

And whatever the value or plausibility of Mallarmé's Nirvana may be, its elements are extraordinarily beautiful. That is why, incidentally, I have always held that the only sound approach to Mallarmé is by way of a meticulous study of his texts. Going

through the texts with a searchlight is infinitely more rewarding than going round them with airy generalisations.

## APPENDIX

### Terminology in *Igitur*

To avoid any cluttering up of the argument, I have left for discussion in this appendix some of the terminology (and verbal imagery) in *Igitur*, which is both important and difficult.

*Igitur*. As a source for this name, M. Roland de Renéville has suggested Genesis II: *Igitur perfecti sunt coeli et terra et omnis ornatus eorum*. But there seems to be no special relevancy in this quotation. Probably it is better to consider the normal Latin meaning of the word, which is an adverb denoting consequence. It is also used as a mark of a climax, summing up after an enumeration (e.g. *De media nocte, de horologio, de abacis, de aulaeis, de his igitur omnibus symbolis*). And *Igitur* is both a summing up of his 'race' and, despite his wish to be absolute, a consequence of it.

*Elbehnon*. The same commentator suggests *El behnon*, which is supposed to mean (in Hebrew) 'sons of the Elohim'. But such a phrase violates an elementary rule of Semitic accidence, that of the *casus constructus*, which would require *Ei* to follow the other word; and how can the *h* be explained? It is interesting to note that *Elbehnon* could be an anagram of the not inapposite German word *belohnen* (to reward, requite), so arranged as to give a dim suggestion of Elsinore: the shadow of Hamlet clings to *Igitur*, nor is there any lack of ghosts in the poem. But I would hesitate to put this forward as a source.

*Capital and small initials*. The distinctions that Mallarmé makes are important. Thus *Nuit* is an absolute, different from *nuit*, which is a single night, a unit of measurement. Similarly, *Acte* is more general than *acte*, as in 'il reprend la Folie, admet l'acte, et, volontairement, reprend l'Idée, en tant qu'Idée, et l'Acte' (p. 441). So also *Idée* and *idée*, *Absolu* and *absolu*, *Infini* and *infini*, *Minuit* and *minuit*, etc.

*Panneaux*. The use of this word, and the image that it calls up, are very puzzling. The most definite picture suggested by *panneaux* is in the Bonriot text of *Il quitte la chambre* (p. 437): 'En vain, réminiscence d'un mensonge, dont elle était la conséquence, la vision d'un lieu apparaissait-elle encore, telle que devait être, par exemple, l'intervalle attendu, ayant, en effet, pour parois latérales l'opposition double des panneaux, et pour vis-à-vis, devant et derrière, l'ouverture de doute nul répercutée par le prolongement du bruit des panneaux'.

Here, apparently, there is both a physical and a symbolic room, a chamber in the castle of *Elbehnon* and a 'chambre du temps' in which a human consciousness is situated. The panels, facing each other on the side walls, seal it off from the Night and its immensity (as our practical thinking actually does), and yet give access (by speculation) to Night and the Absolute. At both ends of the room are two *indubitable* ('de doute nul') openings: the door that leads from pre-natal nothingness, and the door that leads to death. The 'bruit des panneaux' is one of the many transformations of the Midnight chime, which becomes the noise of the tomb's closing door, the sound of the pendulum, the beating of *Igitur's* own heart, the rhythm of the heart of Night, etc.

As a justification of this meaning that I have given to *panneaux*, note this passage in the gamma *Ebauche* (p. 446): 'L'ombre (i.e. Igitur) se sentait opprimée par une netteté fuyante, comme par la continuation de l'idée apparue des panneaux qui bien que fermés, ouverts encore cependant, auraient . . . dans une vertigineuse immobilité tourné longuement sur eux-mêmes'. It is an admirable picture of a mind meditating in the security of a pannelled and curtained room, and yet reaching out, despite itself, into the moving immobility of the Night. The 'netteté fuyante' which suggests this vertiginous immobility to Igitur is, I think, the fluttering presence of the 'génies', his ancestors ('génie' has been discussed in the text of this monograph).

*Tentures, rideaux.* These two images seem to denote time as an accumulating force: a storehouse of the innumerable hours and years. Thus in *Le Minuit* (p. 435): 'L'heure n'a pas disparu par un miroir, ne s'est pas enfouie en tentures'. And in *Vie d'Igitur* (p. 439): 'J'ai toujours vécu mon âme fixée sur l'horloge. Certes, j'ai tout fait pour que le temps qu'elle sonna *restât* (the italics are Mallarmé's) présent dans la chambre, et devînt pour moi la pâture et la vie—j'ai épaissi les rideaux'.

*Spirale.* This word (pp. 437, 438, 448, 450 for example) refers to the turning of the panels mentioned above. It seems to have a twofold meaning. The turning or opening of the panels leads into Night, and thus into the Absolute. But it also leads back into the vertiginous spiral of time, the cosmic cycle, the chasms of space and time where the storms of hazard rage.

*Grimoire, livre.* Apparently, the book in question is the long record of Igitur's ancestry, the thought of many generations; perhaps even the record of anthropological time. Igitur refrains from adding a page to it: 'La pâleur d'un livre ouvert' (p. 435) suggests a blank page. And when (p. 442) Igitur decides that death is the only absolute, 'Il ferme le livre—souffle la bougie'.

The meaning that I have proposed is most clearly suggested by the Bonriot text of *Il quitte la chambre* (p. 437): 'Pour que l'ombre dernière (i.e. Igitur) se mirât en son propre soi, et se reconnût en la foule de ses apparitions comprises à l'étoile nacrée de leur nébuleuse science tenue d'une main, et à l'étincelle d'or du fermoir héraldique de leur volume, dans l'autre; du volume de leurs nuits. . .' The connotation of this difficult passage seems to be: Igitur wishes to find his absolute and independent self, picking it out from among the host of ancestral selves which had been perpetuated by the nebulous 'science' of his family, and which had acquired a sort of specious glory, symbolised by the glittering golden clasp of their heraldic volume. But note that this clasp is a 'fermoir': it does not really perpetuate them, it locks them up—in nothingness.

*Ombre.* With a small initial, the word seems to mean an individual mind; with a capital, it signifies Mind, the timeless matrix of minds. The more limited meaning is given, for example, in 'Pour que l'ombre dernière se mirât en son propre soi' (p. 437). The difference between the two forms of the word is well brought out in 'Elle, pure, l'Ombre, ayant sa dernière forme qu'elle foule, derrière elle, couchée, et étendue, et puis, devant elle, en un puits, l'étendue de couches d'ombre . . . des couches à jamais séparées d'elles' (p. 437). It is a tragic picture: Mind goes on, past, present and future; but the innumerable minds which represent it disappear in death and oblivion, and have no real connection with each other.

*Cendres des astres.* In *Il se couche au tombeau* (p. 443) we find the phrase:

'Sur les cendres des astres, celles indivises de la famille, était le pauvre personnage, couché'. 'Cendres des astres' is characteristically compact, expressing two different ideas: (1) inescapable mortality; (2) posthumous brilliance. The same combination occurs in several of Mallarmé's "Tombeaux", as, for example:

. . . un bas-relief  
Dont la tombe de Poe éblouissante s'orne.

At the same time (such is the richness of Mallarmé's many-sided words), 'cendres des astres' suggests dawn after Igitur's night of meditation. Further still, the actual sound of the phrase conveys a suggestion of death and destruction: *cendres, désastres*.

*Chambre du temps*. This phrase in *Le Minuit* (p. 435) is singularly interesting; for the 'room' in which Igitur takes refuge, for his meditation, from the inexorable hurricanes of time, is an appropriate symbol of Mallarmé's own mind. He was not, like Valéry, a Mediterranean, nor a pagan like Rimbaud: the *Après-midi d'un Faune* is one of his rare excursions into the beauty of the sunlit world. He is aware of the sky, and even haunted by it: 'Je suis hanté. L'Azur! l'Azur! l'Azur! l'Azur!' But it is a far Nirvana, and he sees it only through the 'window' of his lonely spirituality. Hence the frequency of the window-symbol in his poetry:

Je me mire et me vois ange! et je meurs, et j'aime  
—Que la vitre soit l'art, soit la mysticité—  
A renaître, portant mon rêve en diadème,  
Au ciel antérieur où fleurit la Beauté!

(*Les Fenêtres*);

Par les carreaux glacés, hélas! mornes encor,  
L'aurore se jeta sur la lampe angélique

(*Don du Poème*);

. . . vers quelque fenêtre  
Selon nul ventre que le sien,  
Filial on aurait pu naître

('Une dentelle s'abolit').

Sometimes he goes further, and makes his perception of the outer world doubly subjective by seeing it only in a mirror, as in the second tercet of *Ses purs ongles*.

This all amounts to saying that Mallarmé feels himself imprisoned in the cell of his own mortality, in an 'exil inutile' and yet contrives to widen his inner world by means of outlets on to the Absolute, such as the 'panneaux' in *Igitur*. It is notable that the 'scene' of all the following important sonnets is a room with (if the metaphor is not too strange) far-reaching antennae: *Victorieusement fui, Ses purs ongles, Hommage* (Wagner), *Tout orgueil, Surgi de la croupe et du bond, Une dentelle s'abolit, Quelle soie, and Mes bouquins refermés*. And the same remark holds good for *Hérodiade*.



## LA RELIGIEUSE 1760-1780

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As with so many of Diderot's works, the genesis and subsequent development of *La Religieuse* are shrouded in mystery. How did Diderot come to write it? When, and by what stages, did the novel achieve the form in which we now have it? Available information is scanty and often difficult to interpret. A lively anecdote related by Grimm in the *Correspondance littéraire*; a slightly revised version of the same anecdote by Diderot, usually printed with the novel itself as a *Préface-annexe*; a few scattered and laconic references in private letters, mostly undated; and certain pieces of internal evidence, sometimes conflicting, to be gleaned from the manuscripts in the *Collection Vandeul*—this is all the information that we have on the subject. Using material from the first two sources, Professor Dieckmann and Professor May have provided convincing answers to some of the questions, but obscurities still remain. How extensive, for example, was the first draft of *La Religieuse*, begun apparently as the direct outcome of a practical joke played on one of Diderot's friends in the early months of 1760? How radical was the 1780 revision? Was there only one such revision? The manuscripts, as might be expected, furnish some solutions to these problems, but still leave room for tantalizing hypotheses.

According to Grimm's anecdote the novel was the accidental result of a practical joke that he, Grimm himself and 'deux ou trois autres bandits de cette trempe'<sup>1</sup> played on the Marquis de Croismare. Grimm's account of the hoax, published in the *Correspondance littéraire* in 1770, ten years after the events it related were supposed to have taken place, included a series of letters purporting to have been exchanged between the jokers and their victim. Diderot was later to revise both Grimm's account and the accompanying letters.<sup>2</sup>

The substance of the *mystification* was as follows. Three years earlier, a nun from Longchamp appealed against her vows. (The history of this nun has been successfully reconstructed by Professor May in his *Diderot et la Religieuse*.<sup>3</sup>) Without knowing anything of the facts of the case, and according to Grimm ignorant of the exact name of the nun concerned, the Marquis de Croismare:

alla solliciter en sa faveur tous les conseillers de grand'chambre du parlement de Paris.<sup>4</sup>

She lost her case, however, and returned into obscurity. The Marquis subsequently went to Normandy, where he had an estate, and, apparently for reasons of economy, prolonged his stay there to an extent which seemed excessive to his friends in Paris. Remembering the incident, they hit upon an expedient which they felt would rapidly bring him back. This was to write a letter, ostensibly from the nun, saying that she had escaped from her convent and was in hiding in Paris, more in need of his help than ever.

The plan did not entirely succeed. The Marquis, says Grimm, was entirely convinced by the letter, but instead of coming to Paris, invited the nun to Caen, to act as lady's maid to his own daughter. The nun's creators were obliged therefore to give her a dangerous illness, and finally to dispatch her altogether. The Marquis was not to learn the truth until his return to Paris, several years later. Then, according to Grimm:

il en a ri, comme vous pouvez penser; et le malheur de la pauvre religieuse n'a fait que resserrer les liens d'amitié entre ceux qui lui ont survécu.<sup>5</sup>

To this claim of Grimm's, Diderot appended a wry note: 'Cependant, il n'en a jamais parlé à M. Diderot'<sup>6</sup> which suggests that the Marquis was not as amused as he affected to be, and even that Diderot himself entertained certain qualms about the whole affair. It may have simply been that he was never quite convinced that the hoax had come off. A letter to Mme d'Epinay shows him dubious about the genuineness of one of the Marquis's replies<sup>6</sup>; and he appended a note to the same effect to Grimm's account:

Les lettres de son généreux protecteur sont véritables et ont été écrites de bonne foi, ce qu' on eut toutes les peines du monde à persuader à Monsieur Diderot, qui se croyait persiflé par le marquis et par ses amis.<sup>7</sup>

The hoaxer, in short, may have been caught in his own hoax.

Whatever the truth of this odd situation, the correspondence between the fictitious nun (writing at first under the authentic name of Delamarre, then, at the Marquis's direction, under an assumed one, Suzanne Saulier, later changed by Diderot to Simonin<sup>8</sup>) and the possibly fictitious Marquis, extended approximately from the beginning of February 1760 to the middle of May of the same year. Sometime during this period, according to Grimm, Diderot: 'se mit à écrire en détail l'histoire de notre religieuse.' Diderot later added a clause explaining that he did so: 'persuadé que le marquis ne donnerait pas un asile dans sa maison à une jeune personne sans la connaître.'<sup>8</sup> (Professor May attributes this note to the 'esprit

froid et raisonneur de Grimm'. but the manuscript of the *Préface-annexe* shows it to be Diderot's<sup>9</sup>.) It is worth noting at this point that the earliest extant version of the opening phrase of the novel could imply that Diderot began this narrative very soon after the first letter had been dispatched. It reads, as far as can be ascertained: 'La réponse du marquis, s'il en fait une, fournira le commencement. . . .'<sup>10</sup> Which reply is being referred to? There are two possibilities. Either it is the very first one, which the 's'il en fait une' seems to imply; or it is that of the 25th April, in response to the first announcement that Suzanne is engaged in writing the story of her life. If it was the latter, Diderot must have been disappointed, because the Marquis strongly advises against Suzanne continuing the task, since it might endanger her already delicate health!

The first mention of the story that we have is the one just referred to, made in a letter written to the Marquis on the 13th April, not by Suzanne herself, but by a 'Mme Madin'. The latter is another creation of the hoaxers (although the name was authentic), a woman who is supposed to have befriended the errant nun, and nursed her through her illness. The letter says:

Je lui demandai si elle ne voulait pas vous écrire, elle me répondit qu'elle vous avait commencé une longue lettre qui contiendrait tout ce qu'elle ne pourrait guère se dispenser de vous dire, si Dieu lui faisait la grâce de guérir et de vous voir, [. . .] Je la priai de me montrer ce qu'elle vous avait écrit; j'en fus effrayée, c'est un volume.<sup>11</sup>

The work was thus, by April, already of some extent. A month later, 'Madame Madin' gives an indication of its contents. In her letter of the 10th May, announcing the nun's death, she refers to certain papers, which:

contiennent [. . .] l'histoire de sa vie chez ses parents et dans les trois maisons religieuses, où elle a demeuré, et ce qui s'est passé après sa sortie.<sup>12</sup>

These statements indicate that *La Religieuse* was the direct outcome of the practical joke played on the Marquis de Croismare. They suggest further that by mid-May 1760 the main episodes of the novel were already drafted out. The novel was still, however, far from complete. Diderot continued working on it throughout the autumn, in spite of the fact that his original reason for continuing it was now gone. Why did he carry on? Our ideas on that head must remain pure hypotheses. His admiration for the novels of Prévost and Richardson, the fact that his dear enemy Rousseau

was on the point of bringing out a novel which he had already read in manuscript, could well have been motivating factors. A few hints contained in the revised version of the *Préface-annexe*, and in one or two letters to friends, merely give the impression that he wrote it because he enjoyed doing so.

In a letter to his friend d'Amilaville, dated very plausibly 1st August 1760, by the editor of the *Correspondance inédite*, Diderot remarked simply: 'Je suis après ma *Religieuse*. Mais cela s'étend sous la plume. et je ne sais plus quand je toucherai la rive.' A month later he told Mlle Volland that he had taken the novel with him to Grandval, and intended to continue it if he had the time. The mention is coupled with a reference to his translation of Moore's *Gamester*, 'une grande affaire' about which Grimm was particularly enthusiastic, an association which implies that he regarded the writing of his novel as a legitimate literary occupation. If the date suggested by M. Roth for a letter to Mme d'Epinay is correct, he was still busy with the novel until the beginning of November. Certain insinuations about Lesbianism in letters to Mlle Volland show at least that he was preoccupied with its subject during this period.<sup>13</sup>

The story seems to have absorbed and even obsessed him. (There may have been a personal reason for this—a younger sister of his entered a convent against her parents' wishes, became insane, and died while still quite young. It has been suggested that this is the nun referred to in M. Manouri's *plaidoyer*, in the *novel*.<sup>14</sup>) Grimm noted that the subject of the hoax 'échauffait l'imagination' not only of the Marquis de Croismare but of Diderot himself, and was the reason why he began the novel. Diderot endorsed the suggestion, and inserted into the *Préface-annexe* an anecdote about himself and d'Alainville. The latter entered while Diderot was at work on the novel, and found him 'le visage inondé de larmes'.

'Qu'avez-vous donc? lui dit d'Alainville. Comme vous voilà!—  
Ce que j'ai, lui répondit M. Diderot, je me désole d'un conte que je fais.'<sup>15</sup>

Elsewhere, he confided to Mme d'Epinay that when writing the novel: 'Je laisse aller ma tête; aussi bien ne pourrois-je guère la maîtriser.'

As a result, when he could spare the time for it, he worked rapidly and confidently. In a valuable letter to Mme d'Epinay, from which the previous remark is taken, he mentions that he had worked on it until three o'clock in the morning:

Je vais à tire d'aile. Ce n'est plus une lettre, c'est un livre. Il y



aura là-dedans des choses vraies, de pathétiques. et il ne tiendrait qu'à moi qu'il y en eût de fortes. Mais je ne m'en donne pas le tems.<sup>16</sup>

This passage is dated by M. Roth November 1760, but it could have been written earlier. The statement 'Ce n'est plus une lettre' echoes that of the fictitious Mme Madin, made in April. The letter to d'Amilaville, written in August, seems already to refer to a work of considerable extent. Whenever it was written, it shows Diderot pleased with the quality of his work, and regretting that he has not more time for it. This reference to time is significant, and may well explain why, at some point towards the end of 1760, he put the novel away, and did not return to it for nearly twenty-one years.

Towards 1780, he came across *La Religieuse* again. A note in his handwriting, appended to the *Préface-annexe*, states that:

apres un oubli de vingt et un ans, cette ebauche Informe Lui etant par hasard tombée sous Les mains, il se determina a L'achever et a Le retoucher.<sup>17</sup>

Having done so, he offered it to Henri Meister, who had succeeded Grimm as editor of the *Correspondance littéraire*. The novel was distributed in serial form to subscribers of this periodical, and it was probably from one of the copies sent out in this way that the first French edition was published, in 1796.

From what has been said above, it would appear that there must have been at least three successive versions of *La Religieuse*: the sketch written for the Marquis in the spring of 1760 and referred to by 'Mme Madin'; the extended version produced in the autumn of the same year; and the revised version submitted to Meister twenty years later. There is, unfortunately, almost no documentary information on the subject. That the first sketch already contained the principal elements of the final plot has been indicated above. To what extent did Diderot develop these themes in the tale he worked on so feverishly in the subsequent autumn? Not very much, according to Grimm, who stated in 1770 that: 'ce roman n'a jamais existé que par lambeaux, et en est resté là.' When revising the *Préface-annexe* in 1781, Diderot added an indignant disclaimer:

(et j'ajouterai, moi qui connais un peu M. Diderot, que ce roman il l'a achevé et que ce sont les mémoires mêmes qu'on vient de lire, où l'on a dû remarquer combien il importait de se méfier des éloges de l'amitié).<sup>18</sup>

His interpolation does not, however, tell whether the novel was

finished before 1770, when Grimm was writing, or merely before 1781, when the revision of the *Préface-annexe* was made. The note quoted earlier, speaking as it does of an 'ébauche informe', which Diderot 'acheva', tends to support Grimm's statement. This implies considerable re-writing. An earlier version of the same note, on the other hand, merely suggests that, having come across the novel (*roman* in the text) he decided to reread it and touch it up (*il se détermina a le relire et a le retoucher*). Which of these notes describes the true state of affairs? If the second reading is the more accurate (as would be logical) it is possible that the initial sketch was only partially developed in the autumn of 1760 (though Diderot was almost certainly during that period working on the Sainte Eutrope episode, which occurs late in the book), and that it was extensively rewritten in, or just before, 1780. This would be entirely in keeping with Diderot's characteristic method of creation, as exemplified by the successive versions of *Est-il bon, est-il méchant*. There is one small, and not very conclusive, piece of evidence. A paragraph from Suzanne's first letter to the Marquis was erased by Diderot, when he revised the *Préface-annexe*, and inserted instead into the text of the novel, to act as a conclusion. This is a considerable change, which indicates that Diderot intended the two works to be considered together, but particularly in view of its position, it cannot really be said to prove any major revision of the text as a whole.<sup>19</sup>

It remains to consider the evidence provided by the manuscripts in the Vandeul collection. The most important of these is one in Diderot's own handwriting, with a number of corrections and marginal additions also by him. One would like to think that this manuscript represents the 1760 version, with the corrections made in 1780. Unfortunately the situation is a good deal more complicated. Since the passage from the letter, referred to above as having been added in the course of the 1780 revision, occurs in the body of the text, with no noticeable variation in the colour of the ink or the character of the handwriting, the manuscript most probably dates from 1780 or thereabouts. The corrections and interpolations seem to have been made at different periods; some while Diderot was still in the process of writing out the manuscript, some later. The changes are mostly stylistic ones, but a number consist of added incidents, comments, or more picturesque details. These additions, and the way they are worked into the story, pose certain problems, which will be considered in detail later.

A second manuscript, made by a professional copyist<sup>20</sup>, embodies the majority of the corrections found in the autograph manuscript. It also has one or two variants, in particular the postscript to the

novel which does not appear in the autograph manuscript. This suggests that it was copied from a third manuscript, perhaps an amended version of the first. It was in turn corrected by Diderot, and this fresh set of corrections has been copied for the most part back into the autograph manuscript by someone other than Diderot. Professor Dieckmann suggests that it is Meister.<sup>21</sup> Again, such changes are largely stylistic, but in one or two places a substantial passage has been altered. This is the case with Suzanne's comments on her interview with M. Hébert, the speech by Mme de Moni on the effect of a cloistered life on character, and a short passage in M. Manouri's long harangue on celibacy. The first of these appears in the autograph manuscript, inserted on a separate piece of paper and in a handwriting which is not Diderot's. The other two do not appear at all.<sup>22</sup>

Only a long and expert scrutiny of these manuscripts would permit the drawing of any really valid conclusions, but one or two observations may be made. Some of the marginal additions to the autograph manuscript seem to have been made while Diderot was in the course of writing it. (It was one of his habits, when writing, to leave wide margins for just this purpose.) This may well be the case with the opening paragraph. The original version reads, as far as can be ascertained:

La réponse du marquis, s'il en fait une, fournira le commencement et l'exorde.

Mon père est avocat [. . .]<sup>23</sup>

On the page opposite, in ink which resembles closely that of the rest of the manuscript, Diderot has drafted out a passage substantially similar to that which forms the introduction of the text as it is usually printed. This in turn has been corrected in a number of points of detail. It seems likely that the sentence it replaces, which has been scored out, represents the original version; a simple reminder dashed down by Diderot before plunging straight into the story. It probably dates from the letter written for the benefit of the Marquis de Croismare, in the spring of 1760.

There are other more significant changes. These are the additions made to the description of Suzanne's sufferings at the hands of Sœur Christine. The mock funeral, the trampling of Suzanne as she lies prostrate at the door of the choir, the episode of the hysterical nun, are all marginal additions. This would be relatively unimportant, were it not that two of these incidents are referred to a little later in the body of the text. This occurs in the course of Suzanne's momentous interview with Monsieur Hébert. The priest interrogates her both about the trampling and about the

hysterical nun, and his questions are woven into the text in a way which precludes all chance of their being later interpolations.<sup>24</sup> The most plausible explanation of this apparent anomaly is that the autograph manuscript is not simply a 'fair copy' to which Diderot subsequently made a few more or less important marginal additions, but an actual draft, in which, working no doubt from an earlier and simpler version of his novel, he made emendations and additions as he went along. In other words, it reveals Diderot in the actual process of composition. He must have decided to use the two incidents after he had written out the Sainte Christine episode, but before he had begun the account of the interview with Monsieur Hébert. He was thus obliged to insert them in the margin in the first case, but was able to make reference to them in the text itself, in the second. This immediately raises the problem: how many other changes were made in the same way? Unfortunately, in the absence of earlier versions of the novel, no answer seems possible. The phenomenon is nevertheless an interesting one. It occurs in a manuscript of quite remarkable neatness, which reveals a Diderot much more orderly and meticulous in his creative work than is sometimes assumed to be the case. Moreover, when taken in conjunction with the numerous corrections and additions which appear in both manuscripts, it suggests that *La Religieuse*, like *Jacques le fataliste*, in the words of P. Vernière: 'est en constant devenir, tant que l'auteur vit.'<sup>25</sup>

It remains to explore the reasons which underlie these interpolations. In some cases, no doubt, they are there simply to enrich the plot, to act as further examples of 'what happened next'. But that is rarely their only purpose. Nearly always they are made in order to obtain a greater explicitness, a greater picturesqueness, a greater force. This latter aim is particularly in evidence. Much of the hectic emotional atmosphere of the Sainte Christine episode, for example, derives from piling up of incidents, of which three of the most brutal are marginal and thus late additions. The same is true of the deathbed scenes. The passing of Mme de Moni, and that of the Superior of Sainte Eutrope, are both later interpolations. The conversation with the courtesan, the description of Suzanne's underground prison and denuded cell are further examples of the same trend<sup>26</sup>, as are many of the stylistic changes of which the manuscript is full. Not all these interpolations are in the form of whole incidents. Sometimes they consist of no more than a single detail; the chains which bind the mad nun, the dressing gown and bonnet of M. Simonin, the candles which are lit when Suzanne plays to the Superior at Longchamp, the actions of the Superior of Sainte Eutrope when showing Suzanne her cell<sup>27</sup>, some of the



indications of her disorder, are additions of this kind. They are included no doubt partly for their picturesqueness, but partly also because they contribute to the atmosphere, gloomy or sinister, which Diderot is attempting to communicate.

One important group of changes comprises the names given to the characters. These are all later additions, with only one or two exceptions, such as M. Manouri and Dr Bouvard. Elsewhere names both of people and places are at first left blank, and inserted later. In other cases the names first used are later changed. The heroine herself is first Sainte Suzanne, then Agathe; Sainte Ursule is for a time Sainte Cécile. Once or twice however names which are usually left blank in the text are written in the same ink as the rest of the manuscript. This suggests either that they occurred in the original version and that Diderot decided to omit them in the later draft, then changed his mind; or that part way through his new draft he came to the conclusion that the use of real names, instead of the customary Mme de . . . or Sœur . . . would be more effective. That he was early aware of the ring of authenticity which is given by the occasional use of real names is shown by the presence of the names of Dr Bouvard and M. Manouri in the text.

The purely stylistic changes fall into several groups. The most common changes are those made to avoid the repetition of a word or phrase used elsewhere in the same passage. On page 334, line 8 of the Pléiade edition *piquée* has replaced an earlier *blessée* for example, since *blessée* occurs in the following paragraph. There are numerous other examples. More important are those cases where a word is replaced by a synonym of greater forcefulness, and here also there are a large number of examples. *Liés* becomes *garrottés*, *peine* becomes *supplice*, *défavorables* becomes *sinistres*; *servait* is replaced by *jetais*, *mauvais* by *grossier*, *prit* by *saisit*. These changes show the same tendency to intensify the emotional atmosphere of the story, which has been indicated earlier. A converse trend may however be noted. Intensifying words are actually scored out; *la vertu la plus étroite* becomes simply *la vertu*; *bien pathétique* simply *pathétique*; *la plus profonde douleur* is reduced to *douleur*. Such changes reveal a regard for simplicity which admirably counterbalances the search for emotional effect, and normally prevents the tension of the novel from degenerating into melodrama. A parallel feature is the frequent substitution for a commonplace word or phrase of something a little more elegant: *je m'en allai* becomes *je me retirai*, *laissaient apercevoir* becomes *décloient*; *elle nous aura entendues* becomes *elle aura surpris nos discours*. These changes are not always happy, and they contribute to the slightly precious or stilted quality which the novel

can reveal on occasion. Much more happy are the developments made to give greater vividness to a description. M. Hébert walks down a corridor 'branlant sa tête'. In the first rendering, the Lesbian Superior, in her frenzy, begs for her crucifix: 'Il ne faut qu'une goutte de ce sang pour me purifier . . . Voyez, il coule de son côté.' In his revision, Diderot changed *coule* to *s'élançe en bouillonnant*. The sky seems to her to *s'entr'ouvrir* in the first rendering; this is developed to: 'le ciel lui paraissait se sillonner d'éclairs, s'entr'ouvrir et gronder sur sa tête.'<sup>28</sup>

Two of the rare similes in the text are also later additions or developments. Suzanne, startled by her confessor's reaction to what she has told him about her Superior, likens herself to a traveller walking in darkness among unseen precipices and hearing from every hand: 'des voix souterraines qui lui crieraient: "C'est fait de toi!"' The darkness, the subterranean voices, do not appear in the first rendering, which merely speaks of warning cries ('des cris qui l'avertissaient'). Elsewhere, mention is made of the 'extravagant thoughts' which occur to a man living in solitude. He added a little later: 'comme les mauvais (sic) herbes dans un champ non cultivé.'<sup>29</sup> Still later, in the revision made to the copy by the professional scribe, this becomes: 'comme les ronces dans une terre sauvage.'

A further series of corrections seem designed to obtain a greater degree of speed and economy. The most obvious example occurs in M. Manouri's *plaidoyer*. The lawyer, carried away by his own eloquence, puts a whole series of rhetorical questions, beginning with Où:

Où est-ce qu'on voit des têtes obsédées par des spectres impurs qui les suivent et les agitent? Où est-ce qu'on voit cet ennui profond . . . etc.

In the first manuscript version, each of these questions was followed by a complementary question, demanding, in a variety of forms: 'Est-ce dans le monde ou dans les couvents?' This second category of questions has been crossed out, since they add nothing to the sense, and their omission gives the passage much greater speed and cogency. A long description of the young man who comes to court Suzanne's sister is also omitted, since it is largely a digression; after Suzanne's entry into a convent, nothing more is heard of him.<sup>30</sup>

In only two cases do the changes made by Diderot to the manuscript affect in any way the organization or significance of the story. The first of these is nothing more than a clumsy attempt to remove an anomaly, which has had the effect of creating a worse one. A

long passage on the iniquitous effects of celibacy appears in the printed version to be an extract from M. Manouri's *plaidoyer*. In Diderot's manuscript, however, it is Suzanne herself who expresses these opinions. She then asks: 'Me permettez-vous d'interrompre mon recit pour vous raconter un fait dont j'ai été témoin,' and proceeds to tell the story of the nun whose directors took advantage of her honesty to spy out what was happening in her convent. Realizing perhaps the impropriety of attributing such forthright statements as those expressed in the passage to anyone as pure and devout as Suzanne, Diderot struck out the sentence quoted and added: 'disait M. Manouri dans son plaidoyer.' This gives the impression that the ideas, and the illustrating anecdote, are the work of the lawyer. An *ensuite* was further added to the scribe's copy to strengthen this impression. The result is unhappy, and considerable doubt is left as to whose opinions they are. Such an anomaly, however, would not worry Diderot.<sup>31</sup> An even more glaring one, pointed out by a number of critics, occurs in the letter written by Suzanne's mother on her death-bed.

(Vos sœurs) ont soupçonné, je ne sais comment, que je pouvais avoir quelque argent caché entre mes matelas; il n'y a rien qu'elles n'aient mis en œuvre pour me faire lever, et elles y ont réussi; mais heureusement mon dépositaire était venu la veille, et je lui avais remis ce petit paquet *avec cette lettre qu'il a écrite sous ma dictée.*<sup>32</sup>

The lapse in time sequence, indicated by the phrase in italics, occurs in the manuscript, and it is curious to observe that, in spite of frequent revisions, Diderot failed to notice it. The emotional atmosphere that the incident generates is sufficiently strong to mask the lack of logic, in both cases.

Rather more significant is the progressive rejuvenation of the heroine. Originally, in the manuscript, she was nineteen when it was first suggested that she should take the veil. Diderot changed this first to seventeen, then to sixteen and a half. As a result, she is exposed to Sœur Christine's persecutions when she is barely twenty. (There is surely a discrepancy here; she has twice done her novitiate, which takes two years in each case, she has spent six months at home, and a certain period as a nun under the rule of Mme de Moni.) She is still 'not yet twenty' in the Sainte Eutrope episode. This is the first reading of the autograph manuscript; it is changed to twenty-two, and this is corrected to nineteen in the scribe's copy. This is not such a minor point as it might seem. The pathos of Suzanne's situation is greatly increased by the stress placed on her extreme youth, and her innocent acceptance of the

Lesbian Superior's caresses is also rendered more probable. On the other hand, her stubborn resistance to Sainte Christine seems the action of an older woman, and here Diderot's process of rejuvenation fails in its object.

The principal significance of the majority of these changes is that they serve to heighten the emotional atmosphere which the novel communicates. The gloom, shot by only fitful lights, the constant preoccupation with death, the morbid cruelty, are greatly increased by the interpolations which have been mentioned. In the case of the persecutions of Sainte Christine, Diderot actually goes too far in this direction, and the very excess of cruelty in this episode, which leaves the reader shrugging his shoulders with disbelief, is largely the result of the three added incidents.

Even a rapid scrutiny of the manuscripts of the Vandeul collection thus shows that *La Religieuse* was not produced 'au courant de la plume' as Diderot claimed in a letter to Meister<sup>33</sup>, but underwent numerous revisions. Begun in the winter of 1760, developed the following autumn, written out some twenty years later; this manuscript version revised again, possibly copied out and revised a second time to provide the original for the scribe's copy; the latter revised yet again; it was by all these stages and perhaps still more that the novel achieved its final form. Individual changes in the successive manuscripts may not in themselves be very sweeping, but they show Diderot continually preoccupied with his creation, polishing and heightening its expression, intensifying its impact. It is therefore not possible to consider *La Religieuse* a trifle which Diderot could not be bothered to finish, but esteemed sufficiently to toss it casually to a journalist who might find a use for it. Like the *Neveu de Rameau*, the *Rêve de d'Alembert*, the *Supplément au Voyage de Bougainville*, *Jacques le fataliste*, it was a work to which he returned again and again, until he was satisfied that it expressed, as vividly and as convincingly as possible, a cherished aspect of his creative thought.

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Diderot, *Oeuvres*, Pléiade edition, pp. 1413.

<sup>2</sup> See H. Dieckmann, 'The *Préface-Annexe* of *La Religieuse*' in *Diderot Studies II*, Syracuse University Press, 1952, pp. 41-147.

<sup>3</sup> New Haven, Yale University Press, 1954.

<sup>4</sup> Diderot, *Oeuvres*, p. 1414.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1415; Dieckmann, *op.cit.*, pp. 44, 84.

<sup>6</sup> *Correspondance*, ed. G. Roth, Editions de Minuit, t.III(1957) pp. 18-19.



- <sup>7</sup> *Oeuvres*, p. 1416; Dieckmann, *op.cit.*, p. 47.
- <sup>8</sup> *Oeuvres*, p. 1419; & p. 1415; Dieckmann, *op.cit.*, p. 45.
- <sup>9</sup> *Op.cit.*, p. 41.
- <sup>10</sup> Bibl. nat. mss. N.a.f2 13726.
- <sup>11</sup> *Oeuvres*, p. 1429; in his revision, Diderot added: C'est un gros volume. Dieckmann, *op.cit.*, p. 69.
- <sup>12</sup> *Oeuvres*, p. 1432.
- <sup>13</sup> *Correspondance*, *ed.cit.*, t. III, pp. 40; 63; 221; 69, 74, 121.
- <sup>14</sup> G. May, *op.cit.*, pp. 146-148.
- <sup>15</sup> *Oeuvres*, p. 1415; Dieckmann, *op.cit.*, p. 77.
- <sup>16</sup> *Correspondance*, *ed.cit.*, t. III, p. 221.
- <sup>17</sup> Dieckmann, *op.cit.*, p. 77. See also p. 51.
- <sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 47.
- <sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 51 & 77.
- <sup>20</sup> Bibl. nat. mss. N.a. f2 13740.
- <sup>21</sup> *Inventaire du fonds Vandeul*, Geneva, Droz, 1951. p. 13.
- <sup>22</sup> Pléiade ed., pp. 322, 337-338, 341.
- <sup>23</sup> Autograph mss. p. 2 recto. The interpolation appears on p. 1 verso.
- <sup>24</sup> Pléiade ed., pp. 322, 337-338, 341.
- <sup>25</sup> P. Vernière, 'Diderot et l'invention littéraire. A propos de *Jacques le fataliste*', in *R.H.L.F.* t. LIX (Avril 1959) p. 154.
- <sup>26</sup> Pléiade ed., pp. 295, 418, 419, 306, 324.
- <sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 271, 286, 287, 362, 374.
- <sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 417, 415.
- <sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 398, 372.
- <sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 341, 265.
- <sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 340-342. Autograph mss. pp. 40 verso, 41 recto.
- <sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 296.
- <sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1435.

# SYNTACTICAL AMBIGUITY IN HORACE AND VIRGIL

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'LATIN is seldom ambiguous.' We were all taught this once and one gathers those who take Latin at school to-day are taught it still. Like most time-honoured precepts, this one, too, has something in it: the tight organization of the Latin clause, the clear-cut way each clause is marked off from the next, the well-disciplined processes for subordinating clauses to one another and for classifying subordinate clauses by the words that introduce them—these are characteristics of good classical Latin prose that make for a clarity of statement German prose, and the more *débrillé* forms of English prose, achieve less readily. Indeed, classical Latin prose is almost too well organized: it remained for *la clarté française*, by retaining the tidiness of the Latin sentence, while eliminating Latin's tendency to wanton complexity, to develop a new raciness and subtlety of expression.

But the slogan 'Latin is seldom ambiguous' belongs, too, to its time. It reflects too clearly for our taste a belief in the fundamental logicity of language, fostered by the astonishing progress of linguistic studies in the latter part of the nineteenth century. Latin grammarians of this period talk as though Latin adhered more closely than modern languages to a primeval rectitude of thought processes which later ages had somehow muddled. The way Latin distinguished two basically different constructions with verbs like *persuadere* (indirect statement and indirect command) was pointed to with satisfaction, and the fact conveniently lost sight of that this was also a language which consistently confused intention (final clauses with *ut*) and the consequences of an intention (consecutive clauses with *ut*). Happily, enthusiasm for this playing off of one language against another has waned.

Above all, the slogan reflects a preconception about which Latin authors most deserve grammatical study. Latin grammar used to be based almost exclusively on the language of classical prose and, within prose, upon writers whose primary objective was, or was held to be, to convey information.

It is not to be expected that the Roman poets, whose main objectives (whatever they may have been) can hardly have been as practical, should concern themselves to the same extent with unambiguous clarity of statement. Any sensible critic would be

prepared for less precise statement and more allusiveness. It is one of poetry's techniques for expressing the ineffable. Only a poet can say *sunt lacrimae rerum* and affect us thereby as Virgil affects us. Our Latin grammarians, however, show a lack of interest in these phenomena that may seem misguided if we remember that, however great Latin's contribution to the formation of European prose style, the permanent significance of Latin literature rests essentially on what the Romans achieved in poetry. We are entitled, moreover, to complain, not only at the limited extent to which an independent grammar of Latin poetry has been recognized by grammarians, but also at the judgments implicit in the manner of their recognition. Study of the poets' usage is confined still to incidental addenda to the rules laid down for the prose language. It is an approach that implies, firstly, that the grammar of poetry is not really important; and, secondly (perhaps more serious) that the characteristics of the grammar of poetry are purely negative: a pattern of failures to measure up to the standards of exactness of expression maintained in prose.

Now, there are situations even in prose where we actually gain something by being less clear, while in poetry it is widely recognized that ambiguity may enable us to convey to a sympathetic reader things worth his understanding which we might not easily bring him to understand by unambiguous statements, however full. Roman poetry in the Augustan age went a step further: not content to accept the contribution to poetic richness of an ambiguity that was the occasional accidental consequence of a style more compact, more intense, than that of prose, the Augustan poets clearly went out of their way to devise ambiguities for ambiguity's sake—or rather in order to increase through ambiguity the power their poetry exercised on the reader.

Two questions arise at once: how often is conscious ambiguity found in Latin poetry? and what is the point of it? The two questions need to be answered together if we are to be sure we are dealing with conscious ambiguity, and not merely the result of inadvertence. In other words, proving the concluding statement in the previous paragraph is likely to be a lengthy business. It cannot be claimed it has been proved beyond doubt until one has examined a large number of instances and discussed the point of the alleged ambiguity in some detail. The purpose of this article is more modest: its aim is to study a few forms only that this conscious ambiguity took, illustrating each by means of a limited number of passages, the poetic texture of which is so tightly woven it is unlikely the poet would have let it be marred (the view often taken of these passages) by looseness of syntax.

Poetic ambiguity is nowadays so fashionable that caution seems advisable. Its presence, however, in Augustan poetry as a conscious effect was noted long before the current fashion began.<sup>1</sup> As yet comparatively little has been written on the subject.<sup>2</sup> Anticipating, therefore, healthy resistance to any attempt at introducing yet another concept from contemporary criticism into the study of classical poetry, I shall avoid in this article ambiguities involving essentially the meaning of individual words—poetic puns as it were. Until the prevalence of other types of ambiguity is established, it might fairly be argued (given the limited vocabulary of Latin and the complicated semantic development of common words) that theoretical puns are bound to be detectable in contexts where the contemporary reader's *Sprachgefühl* would have led him to consider one meaning only.

Pun-ambiguities are, in my view, common in Augustan poetry. Perhaps, before passing to the types of ambiguity to be considered in this article, I may be allowed an example of pun-ambiguity that seems more plausible than most. It comes from the opening phrase of Horace's epilogue to *Odes* I-III: 'Exegi monumentum aere perennius.' The first of several pun-ambiguities in the poem is a double-barrel one, turning on *exegi* ('I have completed' and 'I have laid claim to') and *monumentum* (an external symbol of fame such as a commemorative plaque or a statue; and the *Odes* themselves which, by being read, will assure Horace the memory in men's minds that the normal external symbol stimulates). One might get something of the effect of this double conflict of meanings, though not of Horace's serene dignity, by some such translation as: 'My claim on fame is neatly filed.'

Instead, then, of pun-ambiguities involving conflicting meanings of words, I propose to study *syntactical* ambiguities. The advantage of beginning a systematic study with these is that the rareness of syntactical ambiguity in prose and its comparative frequency in poetry which we know to have been written with the very greatest care render it *a priori* likely that the poets were aware of the ambiguities and consciously desired them as an ingredient of their recipe for poetic style. The first two types, involving the conscious encouragement of a state of affairs avoided in prose, will be more briefly dealt with. The third type, involving the creation of ambiguity where one would not arise in prose, needs to be discussed more fully.

In the first type, which we may call *construction-ambiguity*, a sentence is so constructed that a syntactical unit may be linked with other units in more than one way. It is a conscious exploitation of a common enough tendency for the elements of a sentence



to regroup themselves in a way not originally intended by the speaker. When it results in a more or less violent reversal of the meaning of a common syntactical pattern, German-speaking grammarians call this *Gliederungsverschiebung*.<sup>3</sup> In Horace's first Ode,

sunt quos curriculo puluerem Olympicum  
collegisse iuuat, metaque feruidis  
euitata rotis palmaque nobilis                 5  
terrarum dominos euehit ad deos

5

there is much argument among the editors whether *terrarum dominos* denotes the charioteers whom victory turns into gods, or is an amplification of *deos*, added to emphasize the dignity of the gods to whose company the charioteers are exalted. The commentators assume Horace must have meant either one or the other, and that it is the inadequacy of our *Sprachgefühl*, or perhaps the poet's carelessness (depending on the opinion the commentator has of Horace's poetic gifts), that makes it difficult for us to decide which. Gow's comment is typical of an approach that is inadequate to the complexity of Horace's poetic style: 'In Horace's way of reading the line . . . the meaning [whether *terrarum dominos* goes with *quos*, or, as Gow prefers, with *deos*] must have been plain.' If the difficulty were an isolated one, it might be rash to quarrel with this formulation of it. When we discover, however, how frequently similar difficulties confront us in Horace—and when we remember how rare they are in prose and how high is Horace's reputation in other respects as a craftsman—it becomes hard to doubt that Horace knew what he was up to here, too, and consciously contrived the ambiguity. The grammatical confusion (the reader is intended to be confused—momentarily) has an obvious point: it helps to convey the confusion people are supposed to feel in the poem in endeavouring to distinguish between Olympian gods and successful Olympic charioteers. It is hardly necessary to add that Horace is writing poetry, not philosophy or theology, and that the whole passage is pointedly ironical. The ironical note is fixed above all by the juxtaposition of trivial and grandiose in *puluerem Olympicum*. Note how *puluerem* both fixes the tone and economically suggests an image (the cloud of dust that envelops the charioteer). Note, too, the pun-ambiguities in *Olympicum* ('Olympic'/'Olympian') and *euehit* (literally 'raises to heaven', and metaphorically 'exhilarates till he feels like a god', plus 'gives the status of a god').

Here is another example of construction-ambiguity from *Odes* III, 30:

non omnis moriar, multaque pars mei  
 uitabit Libitinam: usque ego postera  
 crescam laude recens, dum Capitolium  
 scandet cum tacita uirgine pontifex.  
 dicar, qua uiolens obstrepit Aufidus 10  
 et qua pauper aquae Daunus agrestium  
 regnauit populorum, ex humili potens  
 princeps Aeolium carmen ad Italos  
 deduxisse modos.

Again a well known *crux*: do the relative clauses introduced by the repeated *qua* go with *dicar* or with *deduxisse*? Taking it one way, we have Horace telling us he will be remembered in the part of Italy where he was born. Taking it the other way adds some local colour to Horace's image of himself as an essentially Italian poet, though writing in a Greek tradition. The arguments both ways are discussed by E. Fraenkel,<sup>4</sup> who comes down heavily, against the weight of grammatical tradition, in favour of the former interpretation. He provides an excellent commentary on his view of the passage, but once again it seems more reasonable to say it is most unlikely that Horace was unaware of the perils of an ambiguously related relative clause, or inadvertently committed one in a poem written with such obvious care for so prominent a place in the collection. Both interpretations make relevant sense, though the senses they make conflict. This accepted, we may with some confidence point to a further construction-ambiguity a couple of lines earlier. The *dum* clause may be taken either with the sentence to which it is allotted by the punctuation of the Oxford text (above) or with the following sentence. Fraenkel rightly talks of a legato passage, though he does not consider actual ambivalence of syntax.

Before giving a version which attempts to wrestle with these ambiguities, a word about the pun-ambiguity in *deduxisse*. The basic meaning is 'lead down'. From here, one proceeds firstly to phrases like *deducere coloniam*, 'to establish a colony'; secondly (via a metaphor from the ancient method of spinning, where the unformed wool was held aloft in the left hand and drawn down by the fingers of the right, which shaped it into thread) to similar phrases in Virgil and Propertius where this verb is used of a selecting, refining, shaping process in making poetry.<sup>5</sup> A translation may do something to illustrate the note of majestic fulness this great loosely-knit central sentence gives to the poem:

Not all of me will die. A sizeable fragment will elude  
 Libitina's clutch. Admired down the ages, perpetually

thereby rejuvenated, as long as Rome's priest scales  
the Capitol (silent virgin by his side),  
back where roaring Aufidus rages men'll say,  
where Daunus once, water-short, ruled  
his rustic peoples, I, a nobody come to power,  
groomed the migrant poetry of Lesbos to abide  
Italian laws.

Our second type involves what may be called *case-ambiguity*. Normally Latin writers are careful to avoid any save obviously irrelevant ambiguities which arise because Latin does not possess individual forms for every case and declension. In verse the writer does not in all instances have to exercise the same care, as there are forms which, though written alike, are distinguished by the metre: short final -a (feminine nominative or neuter accusative) is thus distinguished from long final -a when a consonant follows; short final -is (nominative or genitive singular) is distinguished from long final -is (accusative plural) when a vowel follows. It is well known how Virgil exploits the advantage metre offers him here over prose.

It is equally obvious that there are instances, too, of consciously sought ambiguity. In Horace *Odes* I, 4,

iam Cytherea chorus ducit Venus imminente Luna        5  
iunctaeque Nymphis Gratiae decentes  
alterno terram quatunt pede, dum grauis Cyclopum  
Vulcanus ardens uisit officinas.

we cannot tell whether *grauis* goes with *Vulcanus* or with *officinas*. With *Vulcanus* the epithet would contrast the serious-minded god with the more frivolous behaviour of Venus and her associates in the previous couplet. Most commentators, however, insist *grauis* goes with *officinas*, to suggest an atmosphere of industry and hard work. A better answer is that the poet has given an added richness or fulness to his line by a conscious ambiguity. It is interesting to note how often an ambiguity is accompanied by another: here, the pun-ambiguity *ardens*, which denotes firstly Vulcan's eagerness to begin work again after winter's sleep, and secondly his face glowing in the light and heat of the blacksmith's shop.

A more striking example is *Aeneid* IV, 296-299:

At regina dolos (quis fallere possit amantem?)  
praesensit, motusque excepit prima futuros  
omnia tuta timens. eadem impia Fama furenti  
detulit armari classem cursumque parari.

Here *tuta* may be regarded both as neuter plural accusative with

*omnia* ('fearing all things though they offered no appearance of danger') and nominative singular feminine ('fearing all things though safe'). Of course the effect of the ambiguity is more discreet than rigid analysis suggests. The phrase, one might say, instead of dividing into two is more closely welded together, because the words interlock more intimately than logical statement allows. The next sentence contains a similar ambiguity, coupled with a construction-ambiguity. We may understand *eadem* as nominative with *impia Fama*, when *detulit* is constructed only with the following accusative and infinitive ('this same mischievous rumour', i.e. the same divinity as was described in 173ff.). But the position of *eadem* strongly suggests, as well, a neuter plural sense: 'rumour reported to her the same things she had already noticed for herself' (*praesensit*); now *eadem* is the direct object of *detulit* and *armari classem cursumque parari* an explanatory apposition. Apart from the intellectual pleasure the apprehension of this pattern of ambiguities offers, the movement in the syntax brings out the working of Dido's mind: she keeps putting two and two together, everything fits, everything points to the same conclusion: Aeneas' fleet is preparing to depart.

Our third type is particularly interesting. The variety of functions of the ablative case in standard Latin offers poetry a fruitful source of ambiguity. A typical example is *Odes* II, 11, 11-2, where *consiliis* is both ablative of comparison and instrumental ablative. But the poets go further. They recreate artificially a case-ambiguity that is no longer possible in the prose language, where it had been eliminated by regularizing the use of prepositions to distinguish the locative ablative (preposition *in*) and the true ablative (preposition *ex*, etc.) from the instrumental ablative (no preposition). We have here, of course, three cases, originally distinguished from one another by different endings, that had combined. As the prose language increased in complexity and sophistication, it became necessary to avoid unwelcome ambiguities that might arise where one set of case endings discharged very different functions. The grammarians recognize that the poets frequently omit the prepositions and sometimes complain of the consequent difficulty in classifying examples as locative ablative, true ablative, or instrumental ablative.<sup>6</sup> They make little attempt at understanding the nature of the poetic effect the poets are aiming at. The effect is complex. It needs to be described under three headings: Compression, Archaism, and Ambiguity. A preliminary word about the first two factors is desirable before discussing this type of ambiguity.

Compression is a constant stylistic device in Augustan poetry.



Morphemes (tool words indicating grammatical relationships) are naturally less common in Latin than in uninflected languages. The Augustan poets sought to reduce their occurrence to a minimum. It is not hard to construct a hexameter containing only five words, and then each word in the line may serve a useful poetic function. Four-word hexameters are frequent in Catullus' Poem 64 and occur occasionally in Virgil. Prepositions are got rid of by recourse to a number of archaic or exotic constructions. The accusative of the goal without preposition (e.g., *Aeneid* IV, 106, *quo regnum Italiae Libycas auerteret oras*) is one archaism. Another is the pattern of poetic usage that concerns us here. Archaisms, then, are in part a means to an end—economy. Skilfully chosen, they are also ends in themselves. As the ends tend to be somewhat ingenuously stated where Latin poetry is concerned, this should, perhaps, be elaborated. A threefold classification of archaisms as ends in themselves is laid down by A. La Penna in a perceptive review of a study of archaism in Catullus<sup>7</sup>: (a) adherence to poetic tradition; (b) sophistication of style; (c) nobility of style. The whole question is handled with such intelligence that La Penna's words are worth quoting in full:

. . . esso [l'arcaismo] o indica, come già nella poesia omerica e come in tanta parte della poesia greca posteriore, il tenace attaccamento ad una tradizione poetica fissa in certi elementi o è, come nella poesia alessandrina e alessandrineggiante, una raffinatezza stilistica che elabora una finta patina di antico, ma mira più alla grazia che alla solennità, o infine, come nella poesia classicistica, è elemento fondamentale per creare il 'decorum', la nobiltà: in ogni caso l'arcaismo nasce non dalla astoricità della poesia, ma, al contrario, dalla sua storicità.

The creation, however, of poetically effective compression and archaism by the omission of prepositions with the ablative case would be seriously hindered by the resultant ambiguity unless that ambiguity, too, were poetically effective. In this connexion also the opening lines of *Aeneid* IV are worth the closest scrutiny:

At regina graui iamdudum saucia cura  
uulnus alit uenis et caeco carpitur igni.

It is much debated whether *uenis* means Dido nourishes the hurt 'in her veins' (locative ablative, a prose writer would have to say *in uenis*) or 'with her veins' (instrumental ablative). The importance of this ambiguity here is best seen by considering the complexity of the poetic fabric of the passage as a whole. Throughout Books II and III the speaker has been Aeneas, relating his adventures at

the banquet Queen Dido gave in his honour. Virgil wishes to convey the extraordinary excitement Dido feels, the result of a prolonged focusing of her attention on this handsome adventurer, for whom she now experiences a passionate attraction. At the very beginning of Book IV Virgil introduces two ways of describing Dido's passion that will recur many times side by side as the book proceeds: Dido is mad with love, Dido burns with love. The second is common enough in love poetry. No preparatory explanation is needed before Virgil can speak of a hidden fire. With the first idea he takes more trouble. Dido is as though wounded (*saucia*). Virgil dwells on the idea of wound (*uulnus*) to emphasize he means more than mere cliché. It is not, however, a physical wound, but what we, with our more sophisticated vocabulary for describing mental states, would call a deep psychological wound. Virgil succeeds in saying almost that: *gravi saucia cura*. Nor is it a visible wound, but an internal one. Virgil says it is 'in her veins'. We must remember, of course, that by 'veins' (the Latin word suggests something deep inside, something more important than what surrounds it, a vein of metal in stone, etc.) Virgil means something less precisely physiological than we should.

So much for the locative force of this ambiguity. But as we consider the words we see they fall into place another way, like those optical illusions which suddenly take on a fresh aspect after we have been looking at them for some time. We are guided to this new understanding of *uenis* by the antithesis of *alit* and *carpitur*. Dido is eaten away (*carpitur*) by the fire of love, but she nourishes (*alit*) the 'wound' within her *with* her veins. Again we must be on our guard against attributing modern physiological precision to Virgil. He was, no doubt, vague about the circulation of the blood. None the less he can think of this invisible wound as somehow nourished 'by the veins'. We should, I suppose, more naturally talk of a 'spreading poison', though by *alit* Virgil means, too, that Dido does nothing to resist the onset of passion she feels. We have, in short, a remarkably careful piece of writing. To it the syntactical ambiguity contributes something worth the reader's perceiving. Notice finally how the passage somehow acquires additional weight and menace from the dull, brooding *w*-alliteration (a device Virgil is fond of<sup>8</sup>) that pervades it. The *w*-echo in line 2 recurs four times more in the next three lines.

In the final stanza of Horace *Odes* II, 3, the case-ambiguity provides a more purely intellectual pleasure, tying together more tightly the elements of a closely cohering sentence:

omnes eodem cogimur, omnium  
uersatur urna serius ocus

sors exitura et nos in aeternum  
exsilium impositura cumbae.

Here *urna* is firstly locative ablative (= *in urna*), and then more naturally attracts to itself the genitive plural *omnium* ('in the common urn is tossed fate's marble, eventually to emerge'—spelling death); secondly, and just as much, it is true ablative (= *ex urna*), and then *omnium* more naturally attaches itself to *sors* ('the marble of fate that spells our common end jumps sooner or later from the urn in which it is tossed around'). The case-ambiguity in *urna* involves, therefore, a construction-ambiguity as well and depends, of course, on a pun-ambiguity in *sors*, which is both abstract ('fate') and concrete (one of the tablets, or 'marbles', tossed in an urn in drawing lots).

A more complex example is found in *Odes* I, 17. Horace, inviting a girl to spend a short holiday with him at his little place in the country, tries to depict a scene of idyllic abundance:

hic tibi copia  
manabit ad plenum benigno  
ruris honorum opulenta cornu. 15

The eleven words fit together in a bewildering number of ways. Take *benigno cornu* first: it may be true ablative ('flow from the kindly horn') or instrumental ablative with *opulenta*. Then *ruris honorum* may go with *cornu* or with *opulenta*. Then *ad plenum* may go with *manabit* or with *benigno*. In order to create the effect of a profusion of good things, Horace has not only piled up words ('Consulto in his accumulavit pleraque abundantiae verba', says Orelli), but has involved them in a lush pattern of ambiguities, intolerable by prose standards, but exploited here to build up indirectly and economically a picture of hyperbolic superabundance.

Here then are a few examples of poetic ambiguity at work. It has been necessary with each not merely to point to the existence of an ambiguity, but to show the ambiguity has point. Let the reader seek fresh examples for himself, remembering that syntactical ambiguity, though fairly frequent in Horace and Virgil, is still a device to be used sparingly, one the poet will be careful not to abuse, saving it for when he has something particularly difficult to say, or when he wishes, for a time, to concentrate on providing his reader with intellectual satisfaction and verbal poetry, rather than emotional fulfilment.

<sup>1</sup> The ancient commentators on Horace and Virgil occasionally admitted ambiguity, e.g., Porphyry on the construction-ambiguity (probably involving a case-ambiguity as well) in *Odes* I, 3, 5-6. It is interesting to study the commentator on this passage. The older editors have no hesitation in allowing the passage is consciously and effectively ambiguous. Dillenburger (2nd ed. 1848): 'Consulto et artificiose posita sunt *finibus Atticis*, ut utrumque verbum *debes* et *reddas* attingant.' Orelli (3rd ed. 1850): 'Ac sane duplex huiusmodi constructio iis Latinae poesis artificii adnumeranda est, ad quae, multis in rebus Graecae inferior, necessario recurrere debebat, quo supra pedestrem orationem sese extolleret.' And the more recent editions of Kiessling-Heinze (7th ed. 1930) again allow taking *finibus Atticis* as dative with both verbs, though they do not consider it might be ablative as well, as Tescari (1936) does. Of the English editors, Maclean (1853) is excellent and Wickham (1874) still good; the later editors, Page (1886), Gow (1896), etc., influenced no doubt by the more rigid habits of grammatical analysis then coming into fashion, avoid drawing attention to the construction-ambiguity. Though Gow in his *Introduction* (p. xxv) mentions briefly a simple form of construction-ambiguity under the name given it by an ancient grammarian, Apollonius Dyscolus—the construction ἀπὸ κοινοῦ.

<sup>2</sup> D. N. Levin, 'Ambiguities of expression in Catullus 66 and 67', *C.Ph.*, 1959, 109-11, offers an exemplary discussion of some Catullan passages.

<sup>3</sup> See, e.g., M. Leumann and J. B. Hofmann, *Lateinische Grammatik* (1928), *passim*. The development of the Latin accusative and infinitive is usually explained as a *Gliederungsverschiebung* (Leumann-Hofmann 583-4, § 169).

<sup>4</sup> E. Fraenkel, *Horace* (1957) 304-5.

<sup>5</sup> A passage in Q. Cornificius (*deducta mihi uoce garrienti*, ap. Macr. 6, 4, 12) seems to have been picked up in Virgil, *E.* 6, 5, *deductum dicere carmen*, and elsewhere. The metaphor is explicit in Hor. *E.* II, 1, 155, *tenui deducta poemata filo*. Cf. Prop. II, 33, 38.

<sup>6</sup> E.g. E. C. Woodcock, *A New Latin Syntax* (1959) 30, § 42 (2).

<sup>7</sup> *Gnomon*, 1956, 291.

<sup>8</sup> See J. Marouzeau, 'Un cas curieux d'allitération chez Virgile', *R.E.L.*, 1959, 114-7.



## THE 'WISDOM' SEQUENCE IN BRENNAN'S POEMS

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THE poetry of C. J. Brennan—especially the cycle presented in *Poems* (1913)—has in recent years become less formidable than it appeared to A. G. Stephens in his pioneer study of 1933. With the accumulation of commentary and exegesis, and the appearance of the new collected edition of Chisholm and Quinn,\* much of the force has gone from Stephens' complaint 'We sit in a theatre to watch a performance we do not often join'.<sup>1</sup> One section that has so far resisted the expositor, however, is the set of four poems which in manuscript were designated 'Solimans', but which are printed under the collective title 'Wisdom'. Placed in one of the more forbidding areas of *The Forest of Night*, and avoided by the anthologist, the 'Wisdom' group nevertheless has an important role in making the meaning of the cycle clear.

The first of these four sonnets—to follow the order in Chisholm and Quinn, which corrects the order of *Poems* (1913) to accord with Brennan's 'Table' at the end—establishes the enigmatism of the series with some firmness.

In Eblis' ward now fall'n, where wisdom rose,  
beyond the East and past the fane-strown sands,  
are jasper caverns hewn of Afrit hands,  
whereover Caf hath hung its huge repose.

There, in the limpid pave, a cloudy rose  
mirrors eternal agony, in bands  
of saddening purple shed from shrouded strands  
where the snared sun a fix'd disaster glows.

A ruby of harden'd flame, an ice-bound woe,  
burns in their crystal breast whose wizard brow  
was gemm'd with name of Soliman long before

him shaped that pluck'd the golden apple low:  
they royal with this only magic now,  
that, dying, they die not for evermore.

In sending this piece to Brereton on 11 February 1899, Brennan

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\* *The Verse of Christopher Brennan*, edited by A. R. Chisholm and J. J. Quinn, Sydney, Angus and Robertson, 1960.

noted 'You will find the eternally-dying pre-Adamite Solimans at the end of "Vathek". As you see, I have used them for my own purposes, turning them to a new meaning (probably the old—as well as the right—one).'<sup>2</sup> Beckford's *Vathek*—to which Brennan may have come through Mallarmé's interest in it—identifies these Solomons as princes who inhabited the earth before the creation of Adam, ruling the orders of the genii, and possessing the secrets of magic and necromancy. When they fell into corruption, the angel Eblis was sent to confine the Solomons to the subterranean regions of the mountain of Kaf. There they remain in a state of living death, their bosoms transparent as crystal, showing the heart within enveloped in flame. Beckford's account of the pre-Adamite sultans removes most of the immediate difficulties from Brennan's poem; how Brennan has turned the fable to 'a new meaning' becomes more apparent in the poems that follow.

The second sonnet is perhaps the best known of the 'Wisdom' group, and presents fewer problems in interpretation.

Northward, he dream'd, in Judah's vine-clad hills,  
of gold and gems, earth's jealous-hoarded flower,  
garner'd within Jehovah's temple-sills:  
and sterile wisdom crown'd his brow with power.

Where burnt Arabia, named the Happy, spills  
above the silken seas that gird her bower  
rich heat of spice her chymic sun distils,  
she dwelt, and lonely beauty was her dower.

The desert lay between them; yet they knew  
each one of each, and love and longing grew:  
she came: and desert blossom'd where she came.

And now their tale beguiles a wandering race  
where, parch'd by the hard sun's indifferent flame,  
one yellow desert billows o'er their place.

In one of Brennan's earlier plans of the Lilith cycle, this sonnet had the title 'Balkis'. As Dr Margaret Clarke has pointed out,<sup>3</sup> it refers to the union of Solomon and the Queen of Sheba, as symbolical of the marriage of wisdom and beauty. This event caused the desert to blossom in its hour, but has now faded into legend, and 'one yellow desert billows o'er their place'.

The third poem, which has found no explicator, is one of Brennan's more deterrent pieces.

Because he felt against his hundred years  
the beating of the wings of Azrael,  
the Master, he that watch'd o'er Afrit fears  
building the Temple incorruptible,

palm-propt on guile of cedarn wands, uprears  
his dreadful stature in the crystal cell  
that thence, tho' death unsaint their magian spheres,  
erect, his eyes might dwell, implacable.

So, when at last the worm-pierc'd cedar snapt  
and, at the sound of his great fall, the Jinn  
sail'd clamorously towards Eblis, disabused,

long since his temple-tomb stood builded apt  
where we might feel the night that haunts our sin  
vaster, that once a mighty spirit mused.

The key to this is a tradition about the death of Solomon recorded in the Koran. In chapter 34 (in Sale's translation) the passage runs 'And when we had decreed that *Solomon* should die, nothing discovered his death unto them [the genii, or Jinn] except the creeping thing of the earth, which gnawed his staff'. The editor supplies a note in explanation:

The commentators. . . tell us that David, having laid the foundations of the temple of Jerusalem, which was to be in lieu of the tabernacle of Moses, when he died, left it to be finished by his son Solomon, who employed the genii in the work: that Solomon, before the edifice was quite completed, perceiving his end drew nigh, begged of God that his death might be concealed from the genii till they had entirely finished it: that God thereupon so ordered it, that Solomon died as he stood at his prayers, leaning on his staff, which supported the body in that posture a full year; and the genii, supposing him to be alive, continued their work during that term, at the expiration whereof the temple being perfectly completed, a worm, which had gotten into the staff, ate it through, and the corpse fell to the ground and discovered the king's death.

Brennan's treatment of this fable shows the might of the past—as in the preceding poems he had shown its fabled wisdom, and its legendary beauty—now reduced to emptiness. By a stratagem, the master of wisdom extends his mastery over death—so that now the night may brood over his temple's ruin, as the sands of the desert have erased his love.

The pattern of the series is now becoming clearer. The 'Wisdom' sequence is part of 'The Labour of Night', the phase of the Lilith cycle which traces the effort of mankind, down the ages, to find substitutes for the Edenic vision, seeking through myths and avatars to evoke the ghost of 'the first garden lost'. The fable of the pre-Adamite Solomons is to be seen in this perspective. Their 'wisdom' is not equivalent to sagacity: it is knowledge won from the occult sciences, the secret wisdom that gives riches and empire, making its possessor 'the Master'. The Solomons of Brennan's sequence are exhibited as type-figures, and the successive poems make an appraisal of the human aspiration they represent. We are shown the kingdom won over magic, which earns for its possessors the 'eternal agony' of living death; the marriage of wisdom and beauty, now lost in the anonymity of the desert sands; and the seeming conquest by wisdom of death, in which death is ultimately the victor. The movement of each poem, with the imagery sustaining it, contributes to a dominant impression of sterility. This is intensified in the last sonnet, which comes to focus on the chief of the pre-Adamite sultans described in *Vathek*. From the beginning, a 'sterile wisdom' crowned the brow of the magian princes with power, and their final impotence is shown in the plight of Soliman-ben-Daoud, enthroned in his subterranean tomb, with his sterile talismans about him:

Where Soliman-ben-Daoud sleeps, unshown  
to mortal eye, the vaulted bay of gloom  
stagnates, aloft, into the pendent stone,  
his Temple's roots, long wither'd in his tomb.

Chin-high against his flaming sword, alone,  
brooding far hence in heaven's untarnish'd bloom,  
a seraph bars all passage to the throne  
where, priestly dight, the Master bides the doom.

Dully his mitre blazes o'er his brow  
whereunder the dead eyes, wide-set, avow  
the terror of the day that he awaits:

and, o'er his mitre's peak, his word of might,  
figured in solid fire, irradiates  
its sterile secret into oblivious night.

The intention of the 'Wisdom' sequence is to expose the aspiration to knowledge as another of the modes through which Lilith mocks



mankind, as men seek vainly for some substitute for the primal vision they have forfeited.

NOTES

<sup>1</sup> A. G. Stephens, *Chris: Brennan* (*The Bookfellow*, Sydney, 1933), p. 42.

<sup>2</sup> Papers of J. Le Gay Brereton, Mitchell Library, Sydney.

<sup>3</sup> 'The Symbolism of Brennan and of Mallarmé: A Comparison', *Southerly*, X (1949), 219-226.

## HÖLDERLIN'S HELLENISM

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THAT a certain attachment to Greece (never amounting however to a 'tyranny' of Greece over Germany) forms a constitutive element of what has come to be called German Classicism, is a well-established fact. It has become customary to point to the important influence exerted by Winckelmann's theory of the 'edle Einfalt und stille Grösse' of antiquity, and to show how Goethe, Schiller, Humboldt and others saw in the simplicity and harmony of Greek life and literature an enduring ideal of perfection which admittedly could (perhaps also should) not be equalled or even directly imitated by modern times, but which nevertheless provided a standard of timeless validity. The Hellenism of the so-called Weimar Classicism was characterised by a basically non-historical outlook, by a tendency to regard the Greek model in some sense as an absolute. This is not to say that certain essential differences between ancient and modern art passed unnoticed—Schiller, for example, could say that the Greeks 'were Nature', whereas the moderns sought to regain the oneness with Nature that they had lost. But although the relevance of the Greek achievement was limited in this way by changing historical circumstances and by changes in the nature of artistic expression, one can still say that Greek art was not itself, strictly speaking, regarded as an historical phenomenon, subject (as it must have been) to the same laws of historical development that condition all ages. It is too little recognised however that Hölderlin, who, despite (or perhaps because of) his estrangement from Weimar, represents probably the most consistent example of 'classical' style and principles of composition in the German literature of the time, modified this view substantially, recognising especially the historic-

ity also of ancient Greece. We shall attempt here to give a brief outline of some of the distinctive elements of this attitude, in the hope of being able to justify Hölderlin's own statement that his conclusions in this question are 'ziemlich von andern . . . verschieden' (6, 381).<sup>1</sup>

But Hölderlin's Hellenism is of further interest for an understanding of his own development as a poet and for a proper appreciation of the 'Hesperian' poetry that he wrote in his later years. To what extent, it must be asked, does his enthusiastic adoption of 'patriotic' themes (his so-called 'vaterländische Wendung', his mythological conception of a regenerate Germany) represent a lessening of the Hellenic influence, and to what extent rather its adaptation? The much debated question of 'Griechenland und Hesperien' must therefore be touched upon both in its more subjective and its more objective aspects.

It is interesting to note that Hölderlin emancipated himself only gradually from the pervading influence of Winckelmann. Thus in his 'Magisterarbeit', *Geschichte der schönen Künste unter den Griechen*, which reveals on the whole little originality of thought, he lauds the aesthetically balanced perfection of antiquity: 'Überall war Freiheit, hoher Heldenmut, sinnliche Schönheit, und Bewusstsein derselben.' And the view expounded somewhat later in his *Hyperion* seems very similar. In his analysis of antiquity during his visit to Athens Hyperion speaks of 'Schönheit' as the essence of things Greek (or Athenian): the Athenians were enabled to develop to maturity unhindered by inclement conditions or by coercion from without—'dass die Athener so frei von gewaltsamem Einfluss aller Art, so recht bei mittelmässiger Kost aufwuchsen, das hat sie so vortreflich gemacht, und diss nur konnt' es!' (I, 140); they matured with the freedom and inevitability of natural growth, unspoiled by the despotic influence of the human will (as occurred with the Spartans). Thus they achieved a more than humanly perfect beauty, one which was the direct emanation of the working of natural law, and which was also directly reflected in art ('Das erste Kind der menschlichen, der göttlichen Schönheit ist die Kunst'), in religion ('Der Schönheit zweite Tochter ist Religion'), so that all expressions of the Greek genius were conceived as a product of this central characteristic, which Hölderlin defines by equating 'ewige Schönheit' and 'vollendete Menschennatur'.

At first sight this view of Greece seems to bear close affinities with the more conventional interpretations of other writers (thus a reference to the 'schöne Mitte der Menschheit' in which the Athenians reside seems to emphasise that same moderation of which others also speak). But it is important to understand that we have

here only an early and a partial statement of Hölderlin's Hellenism, which is bound up with certain basic presuppositions of his thought that are themselves valid only for a limited period. Thus it is no accident that the perfection of Greek antiquity is closely linked in Hölderlin's view with the timeless perfection of Nature, indeed is considered as a human embodiment of the laws of natural being. For at this stage of his development Hölderlin conceived the divine precisely as a realm of eternal perfection, into which human beings are vouchsafed insight in moments of ecstatic experience; the timeless immutability of the divine (see *Hyperions Schicksaalslied*) is contrasted with the impermanence and constant changing of human life, and the work abounds with pronouncements that glorify the 'ewige Schönheit', but at the same time lament the impossibility of its lasting attainment in modern times. Indeed, the novel centres in Hyperion's striving to transcend the finite limits of temporality—'Ich hasse sie, wie den Tod, alle die armseeligen Mitteldinge von Etwas und Nichts. Meine ganze Seele sträubt sich gegen das Wesenlose. Was mir nicht Alles, und ewig Alles ist, ist mir Nichts'—; therefore the vacillation of his feelings in their constant alternation between ecstasy and despair.

But in the second volume of the novel an important change comes about, marked in the development of plot by the death of Diotima, in whom Hyperion had seen yet another incarnation of divine perfection, and in the regaining of a more comprehensive affirmation transcending the grief thus caused. In the concluding part of the book Hyperion awakens to a deeper awareness of the temporality of all life, even that of the Gods—'Bester! ich bin ruhig, denn ich will nichts bessers haben, als die Götter. Muss nicht alles leiden? Und je treflicher es ist, je tiefer! Leidet nicht die heilige Natur? O meine Gottheit! dass du trauern könntest, wie du seelig bist, das konnt' ich lange nicht fassen. Aber die Wonne, die nicht leidet, ist Schlaf, und ohne Tod ist kein Leben' (II, 106). In other words, the formula of 'das Eine in sich unterschiedne', which in the first volume of the work had been regarded as the essential definition of beauty, of that eternal beauty in which humanity and Nature aspire to be united ('Es wird nur Eine Schönheit seyn; und Menschheit und Natur wird sich vereinen in Eine allumfassende Gottheit', as Hyperion puts it in one of his most optimistic moods), is now understood as a process of temporal development, and can thus be extended to encompass the 'Dissonanzen der Welt' and the suffering inseparable from temporal existence; that is to say, death is recognised as a part of life, the finite is not excluded from participation in the infinite by reason of its temporality, but forms part of an ever-developing process of life, which can manifest itself in no other way

than in the 'Werden und Vergehen' of temporal existence.

This shift of emphasis is closely paralleled by Hölderlin's theoretical essays of his Homburg period (1798-1800), which take their starting-point in the conception of the 'nothwendige Willkür des Zeus', in the necessity for the absolute to realise itself in the finite, in that the 'whole' can be 'felt' only in its 'parts', that is, by temporal diffusion. The whole is therefore (apart from the ecstatic moment of the 'intellectuelle Anschauung') not experienced as such, but only in its apparent negation, by means of the separation into its parts. This paradoxical interaction of opposites applies also according to Hölderlin to all forms of literary expression, as is seen perhaps most clearly in the three literary genres (the tragic, the lyric, the epic). The 'apparent' character of the tragic poem is its 'dissonance'; but in reality the latter is the expression of a fundamental unity, which (according to the law embodied in the 'nothwendige Willkür des Zeus') can express itself only in this way, i.e., by being reflected in its opposite, by being present as an indirect 'Wirkung' of the conflict actually presented. Thus the tragic poem (see the *Grund zum Empedokles*) expresses on the surface the greatest degree of conflict, but at the same time reflects the most comprehensive unity of all genres. (Similar considerations apply to the epic and the lyric the former being 'naiv' in its expression and 'heroisch' in its 'Grundton', and the latter being 'idealisch' in its expression and 'naiv' in its 'Grundton').

It is important to realise that this principle informs also Hölderlin's attitude to the question of Greek and Hesperian art: it is our contention that the variously interpreted complexities of the relationship of these national art forms can be reduced to the same law as is fully worked out with regard to the literary genres. A first exemplification of this principle—and an interesting departure from the generally accepted view—is to be found in the fragmentary essays on Homer: *Ueber Achill, Ein Wort über die Iliade, Ueber die verschiedenen Arten, zu dichten*. Like others of his time, Hölderlin emphasises the 'ruhige Moderation' of the Iliad, its 'ausführlicher, stetiger, wirklich wahrer Ton', its close and exact portrayal of reality. But whereas others tended to regard this outer form as the direct expression of a humanity and a view of life characterised by a similar moderation and harmony, Hölderlin is at pains to distinguish the 'Kunstcharakter' from the 'Grundton' (though he does not yet use these terms). The epic is outwardly a 'Karaktergemähde', but only in order to heighten the presentation of the individuality of the main character, of Achilles; thus the structure of the work is such that 'alles vorzüglich vom Helden aus und wieder auf ihn zurückgeht', and 'Anfang und Katastrophe und Ende an ihn gebun-



den ist' (see also the marginal note to the essay *Der Gesichtspunct, aus dem wir das Altertum anzusehen haben*, which states that the action is 'um des Karakters und des Hauptkarakters willen da'). It seems even here to be suggested therefore (using the terminology worked out subsequently) that the 'Grundton' of the epic is not 'naiv' (as is its external form), but rather 'heroisch' (characterised by 'grosse Bestrebungen', as after all befits a 'Heldengedicht'), just as the 'dissonances' of the tragic poem reflect the unifying 'intellektuelle Anschauung'.

The relevance of the fundamental distinction between 'Grundton' and 'Kunstcharakter' ('Ausdruck') for the differentiation of the Greek and the Hesperian can be seen in as early a document as the letter that Hölderlin addressed to his brother on January 1, 1799. Here he maintains that the natural bent of the Germans is towards a 'ziemlich bornirte Häuslichkeit', revealing a lack of 'Elasticität' and of enthusiasm. As a corrective for this innate restrictedness Hölderlin counsels a pre-occupation with Kantian philosophy, which 'bis zum Extrem auf Allgemeinheit des Interesses drängt, und das unendliche Streben in der Brust des Menschen aufdekt', and the influence of which should result in an 'Erhebung über den eigenen engen Lebenskreis' and a 'Gefühl für gemeinschaftliche Ehre und gemeinschaftliches Eigentum'. Admittedly, the 'Genialität und Frömmigkeit' of the Greeks still stands as an ideal, but it is clear that Hölderlin already conceives of a development of German culture in terms of its own historical position and national disposition, and furthermore that a law of dialectical development is beginning to emerge whereby the characteristic artistic expression is essentially the *contrary* of the innate national character.

It is such a law that enabled Hölderlin to overcome the quandary that lay in the necessity of reconciling dependence on the past with the uniqueness of individual national development, and which found its clearest expression in the essay *Der Gesichtspunct, aus dem wir das Altertum anzusehen haben* ('Es scheint wirklich fast keine andere Wahl offen zu seyn, als erdrückt zu werden von Angenommenem und Positivem, oder mit gewaltsamer Anmassung sich gegen alles Erlernte, Gegebene, Positive als lebendige Kraft entgegenzusetzen'). This law was elaborated in various utterances of his later period, notably in the letters to Böhlendorff and the notes to the translations of Sophocles' dramas. The emancipation from the 'Dienst am griechischen Buchstaben' of which he had spoken in a letter to Schiller is here justified in detail. The basic principle ('Es klingt paradox. Aber ich behaupte es noch einmal, und stelle es Deiner Prüfung und Deinem Gebrauche frei') is a twofold one: it states first that the underlying national characteristic is *not* dupli-

cated in the artistic production of the nation concerned: 'das eigentliche nationale wird im Fortschritt der Bildung immer der geringere Vorzug werden' (6, 426). (This is analogous to the opposition between 'Grundton' and 'Ausdruck' mentioned above.) But on the other hand the ultimate goal is 'der freie Gebrauch des Eigenen', for all its difficulty of achievement—'Wir lernen nichts schwerer als das Nationale frei gebrauchen'. for it is a (paradoxical) consequence of the dialectical nature of poetic expression that each nation tends to excel in that which is originally foreign to it.

How does this work out in the case of the Greeks? No longer does Hölderlin see them as living in undisturbed harmony 'in der Mitte der Menschheit', but they are 'Natursöhne', to whom 'das Feuer vom Himmel', 'das heilige Pathos' is inherently natural. That is to say, the plastic excellence of Greek art is the (necessarily contrary) expression of a basically 'Oriental' national disposition, which expression was first achieved by Homer: 'Desswegen sind die Griechen des heiligen Pathos weniger Meister, weil er ihnen angeboren war, hingegen sind sie vorzüglich in Darstellungsgabe, von Homer an, weil dieser ausserordentliche Mann seelenvoll genug war, um die abendländische Nüchternheit für sein Apollonsreich zu erbeuten, und so wahrhaft das fremde sich anzueignen' (6, 426). (The Apollonian is by no means identical with its better-known interpretation by Nietzsche; indeed it corresponds rather to the opposite pole, to the Dionysian.) In the notes to *Antigone* Hölderlin writes similarly: 'Für uns . . . verändern sich die griechischen Vorstellungen in sofern, als ihre Haupttendenz ist, sich fassen zu können, weil darin ihre Schwäche lag'; and in a letter to Schiller he describes the 'grosse Bestimmtheit' of the Greeks as a 'Folge ihrer Geistesfülle' (6, 422). The Greek formal perfection was therefore by no means as natural and untroubled an achievement as the general view of Classical writers supposed—for its measure and discipline represented a taming of the natural passionateness ('sich fassen'), the result of a process of self-containment, as the only way of enabling the original 'fire' to find fruitful expression. It must be emphasised however that for Hölderlin Greek art was not merely a 'schöner Schein' by means of which the fiery ground was curbed and made harmless; rather (to adopt the terminology of the theoretical essays) is the 'Wirkung' of the formal discipline such as to reflect the depth of chaotic feeling thus mastered (thus in the tables for the various tonal combinations the 'Wirkung' has the same character as the 'Grundton'—cf. III, 274). That is to say, the assumption of the (originally) foreign should not be an alienation of self, but a finding of self, not an absorption into the contrary element, but an appropriation of the latter.

The emphasis which Hölderlin places upon the various aspects of this dialectical process of self-realisation can be seen from his view of the decay of Greek art, which he saw as having been caused precisely by the undue accentuation of those qualities which other Classicists tended to regard as the essential characteristic of antiquity, namely moderation and clarity. In a late poem he says (2. 228):

Nemlich sie wollten stiften  
Ein Reich der Kunst. Dabei ward aber  
Das Vaterländische von ihnen  
Versäumet und erbärmlich gieng  
Das Griechenland, das schönste, zu Grunde.

And further in a variant to *Der Archipelagus*:

Drüben sind die Trümmer genug in Griechenland und die hohe Roma liegt, sie machten zu sehr zu Menschen die Götter. Further, in his translation of Sophocles Hölderlin makes a conscious attempt to present the Greek dramas 'lebendiger, als gewöhnlich', to emphasise in translation 'das Orientalische, das sie (= die griechische Kunst) verläugnet hat' (6, 434). The main failing of later Greek writers consisted then in the undue dominance of that originally foreign characteristic that had given rise to their main excellence; whereas Homer had succeeded in his attempt 'das fremde sich anzueignen' and had achieved 'den freien Gebrauch des Eigenen', later writers succumbed to the danger of what one might describe as 'Ueberfremdung'. Thus it is evident that the Greek excellence of 'Darstellungsweise'—like the Hesperian 'enthusiasm'—is in reality but the antithetical stage of a dialectical process, and should be subordinated to the re-integrated and consciously affirmed native element.

With the Hesperians almost the reverse applies. The modern 'Menschen von Erziehung', for whom reflectiveness and 'Nüchternheit' are inborn characteristics, lack in their turn the enthusiasm which was the natural element of the Greeks. But precisely for that reason the Hesperian mode of expression is dominated by 'Leidenschaft', in which they will excel more than the Greeks (whereas the Greeks excelled in formal perfection): 'wie ich glaube, ist gerade die Klarheit der Darstellung uns ursprünglich so natürlich wie den Griechen das Feuer vom Himmel' (6, 425-6). The nature of modern writing is therefore to forgo some of the Greek clarity of expression for the sake of greater intensity of feeling.

But by the same token, the real goal of Hesperian writing is not the unfettered expression of feeling (unchecked 'Begeisterung')—on the contrary, Hölderlin warns often of the dangers attendant

upon a 'Begeisterung' that is not supplemented by 'Nüchternheit' ('Das ist das Maas der Begeisterung, das jedem Einzelnen gegeben ist, dass der eine bei grösserem, der andere nur bei schwächerem Feuer die Besinnung noch im nöthigen Grade behält. Da wo die Nüchternheit dich verlässt, da ist die Gränze deiner Begeisterung')—, but as with the Greeks 'der freie Gebrauch des Eigenen', the integration of the acquired enthusiasm with the native 'Besonnenheit', that is in other words, the regaining and retention of sobriety in the midst of enthusiasm (and thereby the 'appropriation' of enthusiasm). In this light the significance of Hölderlin's compliment to Böhlendorff can be understood: 'Du hast an Präzision und tüchtiger Gelenksamkeit so sehr gewonnen und nichts an Wärme verloren, im Gegentheil, wie eine gute Klinge, hat sich die Elastizität Deines Geistes in der beugenden Schule nur um so kräftiger erwiesen, Diss ist's wozu ich Dir vorzüglich Glück wünsche.' Böhlendorff has thus not only maintained the 'warmth' he had acquired, but had also consciously regained as an artistic achievement the sobriety and clarity which (in a dialectically undeveloped form) were his heritage as a modern writer. (It is this reaffirmation of one's own character that is the goal that is so difficult of achievement.) In the poem *Deutscher Gesang* this situation of the German poet is expressed in similar terms: the poet is 'des Geistes voll', but 'es glühet ihm die Wange vor Schaam, Unheilig jeder Laut des Gesangs', until finally, sitting 'im tiefen Schatten', 'am kühlathmenden Bache', he is able to name in his song the spirit of the 'Vaterland':

Und singt, wenn er des heiligen nüchternen Wassers  
Genug getrunken, fernhin lauschend in die Stille,  
Den Seelengesang. (2, 202).

Thus the Greek and the Hesperian paths of development are in a sense diametrically opposite. Whereas the Greek 'Bildungsweg' might be described as a re-affirmation of 'das heilige Feuer' by self-realisation in the grosse Bestimmtheit of outstanding formal clarity, the Hesperian goal is the expression of natural reflectiveness and sobriety in 'schöne Leidenschaft', in an enthusiasm which is controlled by a re-integrated 'Besonnenheit'. It is this insight to which Hölderlin owes his increasing freedom from the domination of the Greek example: 'Bei uns ist's umgekehrt. Desswegen ist's auch so gefährlich sich die Kunstregeln einzig und allein von griechischer Vortreflichkeit zu abstrahiren. Ich habe lange daran laborirt und weiss nun dass ausser dem, was bei den Griechen und uns das höchste seyn muss, nemlich dem lebendigen Verhältniss und Geschick, wir nicht wohl etwas gleich mit ihnen haben dürften' (6, 426).



The common element is thus the law of dialectical self-realisation as such, which applies universally.—The contrasting nature of this correspondence would seem to diminish the importance of the direct relationship of dependence of the one culture upon the other—in what form, if at all, does the concept of the 'imitation' of antiquity still hold? The particular connection between the Greeks and the Hesperians has its origin in the (more or less) accidental analogousness of their development: for the regaining of their own character ('der freie Gebrauch des Eigenen') consists for the Hesperians in the conscious achieving of sobriety—and the Greeks, although in a different context, and as a different aspect of their national artistic development, have provided an unexcelled model for precisely that quality: 'das eigene muss so gut gelernt seyn, wie das Fremde. Desswegen sind uns die Griechen unentbehrlich' (6, 426). (It is clear from this statement that the Hesperian dependence upon Greek models—in so far as it exists—is still, as previously, based upon the 'grosse Bestimmtheit' of the Greeks; the assertion frequently met with, that the position is now reversed, that the Hesperians should direct their energies towards the Greek 'Feuer vom Himmel', seems hardly tenable.) And since the Hesperian goal can only be reached with difficulty, the indirect assistance of the Greek example is still of value, even though Hölderlin has now perceived the essential difference between the two national forms—perhaps the Hesperians even have a certain advantage over the Greeks, in that they can learn from the Greek example (and from the Greek failings) and thus be surer of their own path; thus even in the early essay *Der Gesichtspunct, aus dem wir das Altertum anzusehen haben* he points out that a knowledge of both the nature of the 'Bildungstrieb' as such and of the 'Umwege und Abwege' it has taken is essential for a recognition of one's own way.

We see then that in his later work Hölderlin succeeds in reducing Greek art to the same dialectical laws of historical development as pervade modern culture. And it is further evident in what sense it was for him necessary to emancipate himself from the 'Dienst am griechischen Buchstaben' which was more prominent in his earlier work, in favour of what he called 'das hohe und reine Frohloken vaterländischer Gesänge'. For his later hymns, with their seemingly 'free', but in reality carefully planned verse form and their complex structural unity (evident when one compares them to the 'hymns' of other German writers), can well be understood as an expression of that which Hölderlin saw as characteristic of Hesperian poetry, namely a 'Begeisterung' which is refined and perfected by a consciously applied 'Nüchternheit'.<sup>3</sup>

## Book Reviews

### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Quotations are taken where possible from Hölderlin, *Sämtliche Werke*, (Grosse Stuttgarter Ausgabe, hrsg. v. Friedrich Beissner, Stuttgart, Cotta/Kohlhammer, 1943ff.), with volume numbers given in Arabic numerals; otherwise from Hölderlin, *Sämtliche Werke*, (Begonnen durch N. v. Hellin-grath, fortgef. durch Fr. Seebass und L. v. Pigenot, 3. Auflage, Berlin, Propyläen-Verlag, 1943), with the volume number (III) being given in Roman numerals. (Quotations from *Hyperion* are from the first editions, as in the Grosse Stuttgarter Ausgabe).

<sup>2</sup> For a fuller treatment of Hölderlin's poetic theory, see Ryan, L. J., *Hölderlins Lehre vom Wechsel der Töne*. (Stuttgart, Kohlhammer, 1960).

## BOOK REVIEWS

PLATO: GORGIAS. A new translation by W. Hamilton. *Penguin Classics*, 1960.

THIS is the fifth Penguin in the Plato series, following the *Last Days of Socrates* (*Apology*, *Crito*, *Phaedo*), *Republic*, *Symposium* and *Protagoras and Meno*. Dr Hamilton, who is Headmaster of Rugby, has already translated the *Symposium*. The *Gorgias* has appeared in English, French and German translations since the war and was already in the Loeb and Budé series (W. R. M. Lamb, 1932: A. Croiset, 1935) but beyond all of these the four volumes of Benjamin Jowett's *Plato*, revised for the fourth time in 1953 by leading scholars, must still be regarded as supreme. There can be no doubt, however, that the Penguin Classics are reaching a wider circle of Greekless readers than any of the above, as well as undergraduates studying the texts, and Hamilton has made two worthy contributions.

Jowett's ideal was to 'retain as far as possible the characteristic qualities of the ancient writer . . . his freedom, grace, simplicity, stateliness, weight, precision'. It was in the last of these that his great work fell short. According to Abbott, he was in the habit of 'polishing the English, when he had laid the Greek aside,' but the revisers of 1953 have virtually abolished the gap while always remaining wary of 'provoking the just resentment of Jowett's magisterial shade'. (Vol. I. Preface p.xx.). Hamilton's version has notably good qualities; it is lucid, smooth, lively and close to the Greek. He has risked less colloquialisms than some Penguin translators, but these are successful. *τὰ καλλωπίσματα* becomes 'a mere flummery' (492 c 6); *τὸ δὲ ὅλον ψεῦδος ἐστὶ* 'now all that is pure moonshine' (519 b 8), *τῶν τὰ ὄτα κατεαγῶτων* becomes 'pro-Spartans with cauliflower ears', which improves on Jowett's sedate 'pugilists' (515 e 8). Plato's unsurpassed skill with particles contributes much to the subtlety and charm of his style, and Hamilton has used a corresponding variety of words and phrases with understanding and fidelity. Only very occasionally has he reconstructed sentences. Omissions or questionable abbreviations noted are of a minor character (457 d 5, 467 a 1-2, 503 d 7, 514 c 6). There is a slip at an unfortunate point in Socrates' summary of his position (506 c 9 'Good as a means to pleasure' should read 'Pleasure as a means to good'), and at 497 b 8 *οὐ' οὐ' αὐτῇ ἢ τιμῇ* surely means 'it is not for you to estimate their value', not 'it is not your reputation that will suffer.'

## Book Reviews

Study of the *Gorgias* will receive a powerful impetus from the large and scholarly edition produced by the retiring Regius Professor at Oxford.\* Quite apart from its philosophical importance, it possesses considerable literary interest. In the more dramatic moments, Plato's style vividly echoes the cut and thrust of debate; he makes Polus expound his view of oratory in language which reflects the pretentious, artificial Greek of Polus himself and his master Gorgias; he makes Callicles speak with vehement eloquence and after he has contemptuously broken off the dialogue, there follows the deeper eloquence of Socrates, as he makes his final plea for righteousness both personal and public, and relates the myth of the divine Assize. The setting of the *Gorgias* is simple, and the plot has an inner unity of purpose. The two themes of *ῥητορική* and *εὐσαιομονία*, at first sight unrelated, are interwoven. 'The interweaving is dynamic, not external or mechanical . . . the movement is not that of a pendulum, but of an ascending spiral, where at each fresh turn of the road we can see further than before.' (Dodds: Introd. p.3) Socrates' contempt for the oratory of the sophists in their schools and of the democratic leaders in the assembly is forcibly expressed, and matches his urgent appeal for right living rather than the acquisition of personal and political power. We have a life-like portrait of Socrates—his humility (470 c, 506 a.), intellectual candour and self-confidence (458 a, 472, 511a), his ironical humour (487 d-e, 489 d) and his moral fervour. Plato himself is uniquely revealed in the tense struggle which took place before he despaired of Athenian democracy and devoted himself to philosophy; this lies behind the eloquence of Callicles' exposition of the doctrine 'might is right', the pursuit of power and the gratification of desire. As Festugiere says, 'Nul auteur ne rend si fortement les sentiments d' autrui à moins que son propre cœur ne batte à l' unisson' (quoted by Dodds p.14, n.1.)

Of these literary and philosophical aspects Hamilton has given a necessarily brief indication in his Foreword. Some detailed points deserve mention. Must we leave open the question whether Callicles is a real or imaginary character? (p.11). Dodds (Introd. pp. 12-13) gives cogent reasons for his authenticity. It is surely going too far to say of the dramatic date 'it would appear to be securely fixed in 405 B.C.' (p.13). The evidence is so conflicting that we must leave it unresolved, and remember that Plato was not very concerned about contradictions and anachronisms. As to the date of composition, Dodds argues strongly for 387-385 B.C.

The *Gorgias* has much to commend it as a University text. Besides its literary merit, there are many incidental themes which can usefully be developed e.g. philosophy as clarification (457 c), the *ψύσις νόμος* antithesis (482-4), theories of punishment (478 d-e), the *κόσμος* principle (508 a), *σῶμα σῆμα* (493 a) and other Pythagorean doctrines. Although there is no small edition in English available later than W. H. Thompson (4th ed. 1915) students could work from an Oxford text, and draw on the rich resources of Dodd's major work.

\* PLATO: GORGIAS. A revised Text with Introduction and Commentary by E. R. Dodds. O.U.P. 1959, pp. 406.

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B. F. HARRIS

REALITY AND ALLEGORY IN THE ODYSSEY. L. G. Pocock. Amsterdam, Hakkert, 1959, pp. 200.

WHEN in 1952 Professor Pocock visited Sicily, and Trapani in particular, with Samuel Butler's *Authoress of the Odyssey* in one hand and a text of

## Book Reviews

the *Odyssey* in the other, he was unprepared for the discoveries which awaited him, and which he has since expounded in a series of books and articles: *The Landfalls of Odysseus* (1955), *The Sicilian Origin of the Odyssey* (1957), *Samuel Butler and the Site of Scheria (Greece and Rome, 1957, pp. 125-130)*, a forthcoming note in *Hermes*, and most comprehensively in the book under review. Throughout these there is a growing confidence that his thesis is right, and, especially in *Reality and Allegory in the Odyssey*, he writes with engaging directness and candour, eschewing the overburden of Homeric scholarship, and describing in personal terms his experience of detection.

The argument is two-fold: (1) all the landfalls of Odysseus are *real* places, to be identified from accurate and (except in the case of Ithaca) explicit topographical clues; (2) all these places, being in Sicilian or Western Mediterranean waters, and so under Phoenician control in the first half of the 7th Century B.C., are given fictitious or allegorical names. There follows a further 'exploration of possibilities' concerning the poet and the composition of the poem, and a conclusion justly drawing attention to the drastic implications of this thesis for the whole field (or battleground) of Odyssean studies.

P. is at his best on topography. His identifications, beginning with Butler's Scheria-Trapani, and the admittedly complicated case for Ithaca-Trapani, proceed by way of North Sicilian waters and coastal scenery (where Vulcano is used for the Planctae, Vulcano for Scylla and Charybdis (in extraordinary detail), Ustica for Circe's island Aeaea, Stromboli for the isle of Aeolus, and Castellamare for Laestrygonia) through Thrinacia (Ortygia-Syracuse), to the House of Hades, the Cimmerians and Ogygia located near the 'gateway of the Sun' in the Straits of Gibraltar. The key to the whole is, of course, Scheria-Trapani. Here one can only comment that the cumulative effect of the carefully detailed topographical argument is as convincing as one could wish, and outside the range of mere coincidence. The case is strong enough even without the great weight that P. places on the ship-like reef Punta Ligny, which is but one portion of the topographical description.

Once Scheria becomes Trapani, Trapanese scenery assumes a much greater importance for our understanding of the homecoming of Odysseus. Other significant details emerge, most notably Asteris (Formica), where the suitors lay in wait for Telemachus, the Hill of Hermes, the Swift Isles, the mountain Neriton, the harbour of Phorcys. The three notorious islands Dulichium, Same, Zacynthus find their counterparts in Isola Lunga, Favignana, Levanzo, while Marettimo is reserved to provide an unexpectedly ingenious solution to the problems of the passage ix. 21-26. In other words, Trapani must be Ithaca as well as Scheria.

The consequences of this second identification are even more momentous than the first. If topographical details which could only be known to a person familiar with Trapanese scenery are carefully inserted in the poem, the *Odyssey* is, in part if not entirely, of Sicilian origin; and, moreover, this supposition is confirmed by further identifications around the coasts of Sicily. P. has dealt with this section of his argument with unprecedented thoroughness and gusto, illuminating several obscurities, dealing a blow here and there at scholastics in general and Merry in particular, (e.g. p. 57 f. cf. *Classical Review*, 1958, p. 109 f.), and using the unorthodox (for Odyssean 'fairy-land' scholarship at least) aids of personal observation and inspection, Admiralty Charts, Mediterranean Pilots, and the services of hydrographers, cartographers, vulcanologists, and even entomologists.

With the question of allegory, however, we are on very different ground.



If P.'s topographical identifications are right (and he 'deserves to be right' as Davison says in his review, *Gnomon* (1960) p. 84) there has to be *some* explanation of the fictitious names under which the allegory is conducted. P. supplies one, but he does appear to have pressed the evidence far too hard. The hypothetical hero of the Elymi, whose 7th Century adventures under Phoenician overlords in the Western Mediterranean are drawn upon to describe the ten-year period of Odysseus' return from Troy, is nevertheless hypothetical and no more. Even Thucydides vi. 2 mentions only 'Phocians from Troy'. Moreover the allegorical interpretation is sometimes called into service to provide topographical clues, e.g. Polyphemus (a strong weapon in P.'s armoury however), the Sirens, Lotus Eaters, etc. There may be more than one explanation of fictitious names without invoking the aid of careful and consistent camouflage of a tale of faction and strife. This is not the place to supply an alternative reconstruction of the allegory. What needs stating clearly, however, is that the main topographical arguments have an independent value, and do not stand or fall by the truth of the allegorical explanation, and that the allegorical explanation, however plausible it may be, is on a different level, and susceptible to a different kind of proof.

It would be unfortunate if insistence on the allegory were to obscure the reality of the greater part of the topography which this book sets out to establish. P.'s arguments deserve confirmation, or serious refutation by those who disagree with them. It seems to the present writer that this should only be done by those who take the trouble to visit Sicily, as P. has done, and see for themselves.

The book is well produced with remarkably few errors. Additional corrigenda (p. 10, last two lines; p. 95, line 17, breathing) are trifling.

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P. R. C. WEAVER

A NEW LATIN SYNTAX. E. C. Woodcock. London, Methuen, 1959, pp. xxiv + 267.

YEAR by year the need has become more acute for a Latin grammar, written in English, suitable for university students. There are three basic requirements: (a) the new grammar must present the facts adequately; (b) it must take account of half a century of progress in linguistics; and (c) (if it is to serve today's students who are as much concerned with understanding Virgil's words accurately, and accurately appreciating their flavour, as with writing Latin prose) it must deal with the usage of the whole of literary Latin. The present work is the first major contribution to the subject in English since C. E. Bennett's *Syntax of Early Latin* in 1910. It will at last displace Roby, whose *Syntax* dates from 1892, and Gildersleeve and Lodge, whose first edition appeared in 1867. It will be welcomed both for everyday university use and with the hope that it will serve as a work of reference more easily consulted, because in English, than Ernout-Thomas' excellent *Syntaxe latine* of 1951; even though, for the learned point, we resign ourselves to consulting still our Leumann-Hofmann (*obscurum per obscurius*), now thirty years old. (A new edition was announced several times after the war, but nothing seems to have come of it.) Latinists will learn with pleasure that the work has been undertaken by Professor Woodcock of Durham, remembering his clear and full introduction to the style and syntax of Tacitus in an edition of *Annals* XIV.

A word first on the *point of view* from which W. writes. It is obvious a

## Book Reviews

book on this scale must be not merely normative, but in some measure descriptive and historical also. Obvious, too, that there will be disagreement about how this should be done. In a grammar that is too conscientiously descriptive, the oddities of usage will obscure basic tendencies. One that traces historical developments too fully may also mislead the student whose main objective is to read Latin appreciatively. The history of a construction is about as relevant to the study of a highly developed literary language as the etymology of a word. Sometimes it helps; sometimes, by accentuating things long forgotten by the native speaker and writer, it really misleads. W., however, has tried to make practical use of historical grammar: 'An attempt has been made to substitute, as far as possible, historical explanation for cut-and-dried rules, and awkward examples have not been suppressed, in the hope that the student may thus be equipped to interpret his texts, as well as to write correct sentences himself' (p. xvi). Otherwise, W. claims, 'Latin syntax must seem to the average student a collection of irrational peculiarities which can be mastered only by memorizing disconnected rules based on statistics' (p. xv). This sounds just a little like the 'Latin is a logical language' that we were told at school, and in fact W. is prone to equate historical development with rational development. But the grammar of any advanced language, if accurately described, really does become largely 'a collection of irrational peculiarities'—certainly to the native speaker, and there are dangers in trying to know more about a language than the native speaker, who creates its literature. W. justifies his point of view on practical grounds: 'nowadays Latin is not begun till . . . the faculty of memorizing is beginning to wane. The faculty of reason is beginning to take its place, and therefore a thread of reason ought to be supplied in the presentation of Latin syntax' (p. xv). Again this sounds dangerous doctrine, but the student who reads right through W.'s careful introduction will find some of the pitfalls of the historical approach fairly stated on pages xvi and xvii.

The *arrangement* is likewise dictated by practical considerations. The 25 chapters aim at providing a progressive revision course. W. begins with the accusative case, for example, but goes on to deal with the accusative and infinitive before proceeding to the ablative. Clearly this is more effective than the traditional arrangement that caused more than one Germanic scholar to exhaust his energies upon the *Casuslehre*, leaving himself without breath or space for an adequate handling of the *Satzlehre*. Yet any arrangement involves drawbacks. One meets, for example, the Ablative of Price and Value on page 31 under 'Sociative-Instrumental Functions of the Ablative', but is told nothing more about it and given no examples, in order to keep the treatment of this construction alongside the Genitive of Price 23 pages later. This sort of difficulty is inescapable. The following fragmentation of information, however, (there are numerous similar examples) can more fairly be complained of: The long Section 246 on *quamvis* deals only with constructions involving the subjunctive. After a page dealing with other conjunctions, Section 249 (c) begins: 'Always subjunctive when the clause is subordinate.' After a further page there is a Note: 'In poetry and post-Augustan prose *quamvis* is occasionally used with the indicative, on the analogy of *quamquam*.' Now, in the first place the Note is undesirably vague. Horace, for example, regularly uses the indicative (12-14 examples as against 2-3 of the subjunctive), whereas there are only a couple of examples of the indicative in Virgil and about 17 of the subjunctive. Horace and Virgil are among the most commonly read authors and the student will want to know about their syntactical practice. Secondly, those who use W.

as a reference grammar are liable to take the issue as settled by earlier categorical statements and miss the Note altogether.

But arrangement and point of view apart, how adequately does this new syntax treat of its subject? The answer appears to be: About as well as Ernout-Thomas, though one would have liked a much freer use of examples. W. is inclined to give short manufactured examples of the normal construction and to cite actual examples only where there is something unusual. Consulting the book over a period of six months, I have noted a number of omissions. For example, the construction *haud scio/nescio an . . .* in the sense of 'probably' is not dealt with. There is no chapter on agreement and none on pronouns: there are Notes here and there on some pronouns (e.g. *ipse*), but the student will find no assistance, for example, with the complicated syntax of *quisque* apart from a Note on *ut quisque*. On the other hand, the ablative and genitive of description are well dealt with in Sections 83-85. The tenses used with *postquam* are clearly stated—and Mountford's wrong example, *Quae postquam audierit, abibit* (a tense never found, as W. states), implicitly corrected. There is a sensible account of *repraesentatio* in Section 284—an important feature of usage too frequently avoided by normative grammarians because of its unsettling effect on young students.

One general complaint: the usage of the poets is throughout inadequately dealt with. I could not find, for example, the accusative of the goal without preposition with common nouns (*ea loca cum uenere uolantes*) or the nominative and infinitive (*ait fuisse nauium celerrimus*), and the following, I fear, betrays W.'s unsympathetic approach to poetic syntax: 'The poets omit the preposition freely with nouns other than those indicated above, even when the verb is not one of those noted in Section 41 (8). The result is that the type of the ablative is often vague' (p. 30).

Where *typography* is concerned, the student will find Ernout-Thomas' intelligent use of all the printer's resources—different styles, sizes and thicknesses of type—immensely superior. The book is close-set in smallish type, the examples in italics but run on in the text, and the frequent 'Notes' set in the text unindented and only a point smaller. The standard of accuracy is impressive: the only misprint I have detected is in the publisher's blurb.

This was a difficult book to write. W. deserves our gratitude for not being content to copy his predecessors. Despite imperfections the book will serve us well, not least because of the practical aim which W. has kept firmly before him. One may fittingly conclude with these words (p. xix):

There does not seem to be any other way of explaining to modern pupils, many of whom have been handicapped at the primary stage by the banning of formal grammar by educational cranks, what syntax is for. It seems to be thought nowadays that understanding of syntax is something that grows with the flesh. Pupils are pushed on to specialize in various branches of learning and science, before they have received sufficient formal training in the use of language to enable them either to learn from books or to achieve clarity of thought and expression themselves. No programmes of wireless talks or visual aids will ever compensate for this neglect. Somehow pupils have to be persuaded that only by command of language can they give evidence of the possession of mind or make an individual contribution to the study of whatever other subject they may have chosen.

## Book Reviews

ALEXANDER POPE: THE POETRY OF ALLUSION. Reuben Arthur Brower. *Oxford University Press*, 1959, pp. xiv + 368.

WHAT is this book about? The reader notices quickly it offers more than the title claims—a fairly extensive critical survey, in fact (Latin freely quoted and confidently discussed) of those Roman poets whose works Pope tried, in various ways, to recreate; together with a more cursory review (translations only) of Greek epic and pastoral. A courageous attempt to face the problem of dealing seriously with Pope's poetry at all in an age when too few 18th-century specialists are equipped to catch the echoes that pervade it.

Noticing this, the reader (particularly if he knows something of Roman poetry and how it, too, had sought to appeal to a lettered public, intimate with a 'classical' and yet alien tradition) will perhaps turn to Brower hoping for a rationale of the poetry of allusion. For one is needed: Richard Heinze, one of Virgil's greatest exponents, was content to account for Virgil's sustained 'imitation' of Homer by postulating a deficiency of the imaginative faculty in Virgil's mind. This will hardly do today. Can B. then explain more adequately why some poets chose to write this way? Surely something more than mere prestige of the 'classics' is involved? Or don't English critics talk like this of Pope? If they do, it is not obvious what answer B. would make.

Where B. may be of assistance, however, is in understanding, firstly, the extent of Pope's dependence (in no pejorative sense) on his classical models; and, secondly, what sort of poetry Pope's models wrote. There is much here worth reading. B.'s appreciation of Latin poetry is, on the whole, reasonable and sensitive. A lot of what he says is worthy of the attention of professional classics, and it is important that minor howlers (e.g., *Pax Augustana*, p. 35 and p. 60; the description of Maecenas as a 'general', p. 183), or B.'s shaky grip of classical literary history (e.g., he does not always remember that only some of the poetry of Horace and Virgil was written during the principate of Augustus—an important point) should not deter readers who know better from a serious consideration of genuinely useful critical judgements and analyses that appear unorthodox only because of the poverty of orthodoxy in classical literary criticism.

B. is at his best in dealing with the non-lyric *œuvre* of Horace. Let us look here for typical faults and qualities. First a warning: readers of B.'s chapter *The Image of Horace* who do not know Horace but become interested in him after reading B. will have to discover elsewhere that the 20th-century image of him rates the 'lyric' poetry of the *Odes* and *Epodes* a good deal higher than the verse essays discussed in this chapter. Admittedly, too, B. talks as though both *Satires* and *Epistles* were the product of the same Augustan society. Unable moreover to place Horace's remarks on the relationship between 'satire' and 'poetry' (p. 167) in their historical context, B. does not understand what Horace means by 'poetry', and as a result is rather more cavalier with Horace as a critic than perhaps befits an amateur. And for some reason he keeps calling 'Walter Wili Apel' a leading authority on Horace whom everybody else (e.g., *Library of Congress Catalogue*, *Who's Who in Switzerland*, and Dr Wili's own title-page) knows as Walter Wili *tout court* (pp. 164 and 171). We mention these trivial, or unessential, blemishes in no Housmanesque spirit, but to make the point more fully that this is a book it is easy to sneer at, a book where one must be constantly on one's guard; but one all the same the student of Latin literature should read and think about. The good things are less easily enumerated. B.'s feeling for style, for complexity of intent and for gradations of poetic quality is impressive. He is able to size up not only



## Book Reviews

the general run of a passage—or a whole poem (his study of Horace's satire 'Hoc erat in votis . . .' is very good indeed)—but also poetic effect in detail. To which one must add (1) the strength of these sections of B.'s book springs from his sensitive application of appreciative techniques acquired in another discipline, so that, where classical poetry is concerned, he is prone to specious, confident statements that are just plain wrong (e.g. what he says on p. 169 about 'language that varies little from familiar Latin prose in order and vocabulary'); (2) what he has to say of Greek poetry is not as good, nor as useful; and (3) he does not distinguish between the 18th-century image of classical poets and the image a reasonable, informed critic would form today—a factor that hardly matters when the two images are not greatly divergent, as with non-lyric Horace (with the qualification mentioned above), but a good deal with, say the *Eclogues* of Virgil.

But what of B.'s image of Pope? It is that which, after all, must determine the book's status as a critical tool. There have been indications recently of strained relations between the captains of the Pope industry in England and their American counterparts. It is soothing, therefore, to find B., in a preliminary note, paying handsome tribute to the work of Leavis and Tillotson, as well as to that of George Sherburn (p. xi). All his prefatory material, indeed, promises well, without being revolutionary: 'my first and last concern is with the poems, with their poetic character and design . . . It seems reasonable and charitable to look for unity in his poems, if we remember to look for *poetic* design, for the order created through using the full resources of language' (p. vii). B. wants to help the modern reader 'to feel the *presence* of the poets and the poetry of Greece and Rome in something like the way in which Pope and his contemporaries felt it' (pp. vii-viii). Allusion, especially ironic allusion, was for both Dryden and Pope, as B. reminds us, an important poetic device.

These fair promises, however, are not fulfilled. For one thing, the book is too long. In the Introduction and chapter VIII there is a substantial carry-over of material from B.'s first book, *The Fields of Light* (1951); there may, indeed, be some justification for this repetition, as that earlier work seems to be less well known than it should be. More serious is the diffuseness in those chapters (I to IV) in which B. considers Pope in relation mainly to Virgil, Ovid and Homer. Here he is concerned less with allusion than with the familiar business of Pope's attempts in the various genres, and the old fashioned question of how he measures up to classical standards: 'How does Pope's poem ['Windsor Forest'] fare in relation to Virgil's deeply felt love of the nation. . . ? Here Pope comes off fairly well. . . .' (p. 57). It says much for the present state of Pope criticism that B. should sound here so uncannily like Professor Tillotson, and so much on the defensive. Chapter IV ('True Heroic Poetry') is particularly distressing; the findings of modern Homer scholarship are allowed to obscure our view of Pope's view of Homer. B. labours some elementary comparisons (e.g. pp. 123-124), and finds an ambiguity that Pope couldn't possibly have meant (p. 111).

The discussion of 'Horatian Pope' is much happier. B. is very sensitive to modulations of poetic tone, and at his best in displaying these in the 'Essay on Criticism' (pp. 190-196), in 'To a Lady', with a beautiful study of the first twenty lines of 'seemingly whimsical chit-chat' (pp. 266-269), and in the 'Epilogue to the Satires' (pp. 313-318). He performs a real service for the 'Essay on Man', drawing attention to the prevalence of a tone of ironic wonder: Pope's 'true subject—the one he brings to poetic life—is the ironist's delight in the consequences of his metaphysics' (p. 224). Sen-

## Book Reviews

sible as the analysis is, though, it is too exhaustive; having put us on the right track B. might have allowed us to do some of the survey on our own.

The final chapter, mainly about 'The Dunciad', has its valuable insights. B. brings out Pope's skill in self-parody, the way in which the Miltonic grand manner blends happily with the gusty humour of Dryden, and Pope's acute sensitiveness 'to disorder in a work of art, a life, a society'. B. reads Pope with obvious intelligence and sensibility; but in his final chapter, as elsewhere, the insights are simply not valuable enough to justify so much leisurely traversing of fairly familiar ground.

A check of some of the Pope quotations against the Twickenham edition revealed no errors. B.'s documentation, however, seems rather sporadic, and the reference-numbers for foot-notes are sometimes irritatingly placed, e.g. on pp. 101, 103, 184, 197, 272. A reference to Thomas Rowe (p. 82) has been indexed under Nicholas Rowe. A spot-check of the Index revealed no other mistakes.

KENNETH QUINN, *University of Melbourne*  
P. DIXON, *University of Adelaide*

SHAKESPEARE'S PUBLIC: THE TOUCHSTONE OF HIS GENIUS.  
Martin Holmes. *London, John Murray, 1960, pp. xiv + 238 + 6 plates.*

To chasten Shakespeare worshippers and flatter the 'eager and unsophisticated' play-goer Mr Holmes premises that Shakespeare's main intention was to write box-office successes. Then, discussing the thirty-seven plays in turn, in roughly their chronological order, he attempts to show how Shakespeare mixed his ingredients to suit the taste of a particular public, varying the recipe to retain this public or please that one. It is claimed, for instance, that in *Henry V* the need for such variation determined that the king should soliloquize before the battle of Agincourt rather than fight in the field, because he had already demonstrated his physical prowess in *Henry IV Part I*, which the public had seen a year or two before.

If this approach is to work, the characteristics of Shakespeare's public must be precisely defined, with the aid of the accurate historical detail one expects from an antiquarian such as Mr Holmes. However, his conception of the kind of people who attended the theatres in Shakespeare's day is derived largely from the plays themselves and from his own acquaintance with twentieth-century audiences. He assumes that Shakespeare's first audiences at the Rose on the South Bank were 'eager and unsophisticated', like modern cinema and army audiences he has known. By contrast, the middle-class public who later attended the Theatre and the Curtain in Moorfields are seen to form a 'different audience from the not-knowing, not-caring public at the Rose. It may not know very much, but it cares to some extent, and the author has had to cater for it accordingly.' Later still, the characteristics of a 'private' theatre public are inferred in large measure from plays assumed (not improbably) to have been written specially for it. 'This audience', Mr Holmes discovers from the satirical tone and the high social status of the characters in *Troilus and Cressida*, 'was obviously expected to be smart, cynical and sophisticated . . .'

The reader of this book is warned in the Preface that 'Some of it is hard fact, some is necessarily conjecture . . .' Certainly there is too much rash and unprofitable guess-work, although at least this is for the most part clearly indicated. There are plenty of hard facts as well, but more often than not, as the following example will show, they obscure those qualities which have kept Shakespeare's plays alive when other contem-

## Book Reviews

porary box-office successes have long since been forgotten. Commenting on Claudia's call for lights in the Mouse-Trap scene of *Hamlet*, Mr Holmes refers to no less than four historical and literary instances of a king being escorted to or from the theatre by lights. It is his use of such facts, however, that is distressing—'To call for lights in the middle of a performance would suggest not fear of the dark so much as ordinary boredom or distaste . . .'

Many irrelevancies and trivialities may be blamed on the chronological arrangement which encourages the author to discuss every play, and allows him to say about each such things as the following: "Polonius' little scene with Reynaldo is another character-study in the Browning vein—how Browning would have enjoyed writing 'your bait of falsehood takes this carp of truth' if Shakespeare had not thought of it first. . . ". Admittedly, the unsophisticated Shakespearean play-goer for whom this book is intended might learn much in this way about the Elizabethan theatre, the use of boy-actors, for instance, but he is less likely to benefit from Mr Holmes's blanket explanation for Shakespeare's English and Roman histories that what was in the book ' . . . had to be included in the play . . .'

It is perhaps fair to conclude that this book contains enough material for a course of stimulating and instructive lectures—for a certain type of public! There seems to be little for the professional scholar, as far as one can tell, for there is no list of references and very few foot-notes, although the Index is pedantically full.

The book itself is well produced and accurately printed, with many line illustrations, mainly of costume, in the text.

University of Otago

KEITH MASLEN

SHAKESPEARE'S WOODEN O. Leslie Hotson. *London, Rupert Hart-Davis, 1959.*

Dr Hotson is a brilliant investigator with a talent for historical fiction. In his new book he presents new and exciting information about his chosen subject, and in his first chapter he sets out to recreate in his reader's imagination a celebrated theatrical event: the scandalous success in August 1624 of Middleton's political play *A Game at Chess*. He even calls up a 'Mr W.S.'—an elderly actor, Will Strange—to be a guide. In short, before proceeding to his argument he attempts to persuade us of its truth, to dispose our imaginations to accept his interpretation of the facts. There is no doubt that his book will be influential: because of its easy style and the general interest in Shakespeare it has been discussed by newspaper reviewers with no specialised knowledge of its subject. It has caused the insertion of an extra leaf into J. B. Priestley's *Literature and Western Man*.

Hotson argues that we must give up the conventional picture of Elizabethan theatre; that there is no contemporary evidence for the 'inner stage' and the 'upper stage'. These are inventions of a later age, its imagination dominated by the picture-frame proscenium arch theatre. Shakespeare, he insists, wrote for a 'theatre in the round', with the audience on all sides of the stage. The gallants on their stools sat at what in the old view would have been called the back. The gallery above them was 'the Lord's Room'—for spectators, not Juliet's bedroom. With all this one can agree, and be grateful that it is so clearly and forcefully argued. It is time the *coup de grâce* was given to an idea that has been an unconscionably long time dying. W. J. Lawrence pointed out long ago—and Hotson quoted him in his article 'Shakespeare's Arena' (*Sewanee Review* 1953)—that 'Of the four known

## Book Reviews

views of early non-scenic theatres, three show incontestably that spectators sat in elevated boxes at the back of the stage'. One of the conclusions of G. F. Reynolds' careful study of proceedings at the Red Bull Theatre was that there, at least, there was no inner stage.

In place of the old model, Dr Hotson offers us a new. His is essentially a theatre of opposition. His stage is two-sided, rather than strictly 'in the round', with the Lord's Room on one side and the 'Penny Stinkards' in the yard on the other. At opposite ends of this stage he erects timber framework of two stories, with curtains that can be drawn back on all sides to allow a clear view through the scaffolding to the action on the stage. The curtains would be closed to allow entries to be made through the trap-doors from the Tire-house—which Dr Hotson places under the stage—and opened 'discoveries' or after entries had been made onto the main stage. In his chapter on 'Orientation' he points out that the Elizabethan public stages usually had their longest axis north-west to south east, and he argues that these timber structures preserved the mediæval orientation, with Hell (NW) stage left and Heaven (SE) stage right. The argument is detailed and ingenious, but open, it seems to me, to serious objections. Most of the argument is based on accounts of the Spanish theatre of the same period and does not necessarily apply to English practice. There is no more direct evidence for Dr Hotson's proposals than there is for the view he wishes to replace. Not one of the 'four known views of early non-scenic theatres' shows anything like the structures he wants. On p.90 he refers without explanation to the best known of these—the de Witt sketch—as 'the incomplete drawing of the Swan'. Incomplete, it is to be supposed, not simply because the only spectators to be shown are in the gallery at the back of the stage, but also because there is no trace of—and no room for—the curtained frameworks Dr Hotson proposes. The drawing suggests another objection. The area immediately to the left of the stage in the sketch and marked 'orchestra'—which is usually understood in its Latin sense of 'the seats reserved for the best people'—is just the area that would suffer the most inconvenience and obstruction from Dr Hotson's timber frames and opening and closing curtains. The other main innovation proposed is the removal of the tire-house to under the stage, and this too has direct evidence against it. If the tire-house is under the stage, where is the 'Rome over the tyerhowse' at the Rose, for the 'sellynge' of which Henslowe paid 'xs'? Henslowe's diary (v. sup.)).

I cannot accept readily all Dr Hotson's proposals for a new model of the Elizabethan theatre. It seems to me that the suggestion he made in the *Sewanee Review* article in 1953, for removable three-dimensional lath and canvas 'mansions', is more acceptable because less limiting than his permanent timber frames, and for the same reason I would be loth to believe that all entries—except those of armies—were made through the traps. All the same, *Shakespeare's Wooden O* is a most important and stimulating book. It establishes beyond doubt that the Globe was a theatre in the round and demolishes permanently the long-cherished inner and upper stages. It makes available much new information about playing methods at Court and in the Universities. The appendices give the information necessary to arrive at an estimate of the number of spectators an Elizabethan theatre could pack in, and provide for the first time pictures of the theatres in the northern suburbs, the Curtain and the Fortune. Only Dr Hotson with his extraordinary flair for detection could have discovered so much that is genuinely new and important in the very well worked field of Elizabethan stage studies.

University of Adelaide

F. H. MARES



## Book Reviews

HENRY VAUGHAN: EXPERIENCE AND THE TRADITION. Ross Garner. *University of Chicago Press*, 1959, pp. viii + 176.

ALTHOUGH the Henry Vaughan industry has been a thriving feature of seventeenth century studies for a long time now, Dr Garner's book is, apart from Hutchinson's *Life*, the first full-length study to appear. 'Almost everything about Vaughan,' he writes, 'remains to be settled.' The reader who stays the course is as likely to agree with him at the end as at the beginning. This is a pity, because it is an honestly-motivated book; the author found his particular sort of response to Vaughan unaccounted for in criticism, and set out to account for that response by examining the evidence himself. Just past the half-way mark his central problem has dwindled to the attempt to 'reconcile pessimistic and optimistic strains in the poetic expression of Vaughan's experience' (why should they be reconciled?), while at the end he achieves a state of near-Nirvana, since the most vexing problem left for him is the question of why the prefatory emblem and its accompanying Latin verses were omitted from the second edition of *Silex Scintillans*. Since the second edition was really an incorporation of much new material with the unsold copies of the first edition, and since Vaughan provided it with a long Preface, a new prefatory poem, and a new title-page, one cannot see why the title-page of the first edition, which in any case would have given a wrong date for the second, should have been retained.

Dr Garner's answer to the Vaughan enigma is that Vaughan was not 'a believer in the hermetic heresy' and was in the central tradition of Western thought. Vaughan's relationship with hermeticism has been the theme of many learned articles over the last thirty years or so, and the extent of his *verbal* debt to hermeticism has been made sufficiently clear to make nonsense of Garner's assertion that the question is whether Vaughan ever came into contact with hermeticism at all. What is needed, if discussion of this problem is to be advanced, is for someone to undertake the labour involved in coming to understand hermeticism as a religious system, and to show whether contact with this system modified Vaughan's consciousness, and if so, in what way this is important for his poetry. The only completed exposition of hermeticism in its Renaissance as well as its original manifestations that I know of is R. H. Thoma's unpublished thesis *The Hermetic Strain in Seventeenth Century English Mysticism* (Harvard 1941). Thoma never really takes off from philosophical exposition into literary criticism, but this is an academic point, since Garner shows no awareness of the existence of his work. Garner's acquaintance with hermeticism is second-hand, and he shows little knowledge of its Renaissance manifestations in the work of Agrippa, Paracelsus, Boehme and Fludd, who were the important purveyors of the system to Thomas Vaughan and, directly or otherwise, to Henry also. Consequently his characterisation of hermeticism fails to do justice to its underlying coherence, its aesthetic richness, and its psychological insight. It is not surprising therefore that Garner should see no further than the verbal parallels which other scholars have already noted.

There are several objections to his discussion of hermeticism as it enters into Vaughan's verse: what he says about *Resurrection and Immortality*, for example, makes the dangerous assumption of philosophical consistency on Vaughan's part, and in general he is prone to accept poetic assertion as credal statement, and so misses the fact that hermetic concepts give symbolical enrichment to Christian poems, and modify the Christianity in the process. Vaughan's most richly complex and satisfying poem is *The*

*Night*, which Garner discusses without showing any awareness that almost every stanza embodies hermetic concepts which need to be understood if the poem's meditative genius is to be properly apprehended. His statement that in *The Night* the poet's primary intention is to give a picture of Christ as he appeared on the earth cannot be supported even by a superficial reading of the poem; one of its most striking features is that Christ as a historical personage is not evoked by the imagery, and in the third and fourth stanzas we see a positive expression of Vaughan's bias towards the concept of immanence divorced from any particular historical and personal manifestation. This is a local objection; more serious is the fact that the whole chapter on hermeticism in Vaughan is vitiated by the assumption of Vaughan's philosophical consistency.

The drift of the whole book betrays a too crude idea of the relationship between philosophy and poetry. In an appendix we are given a list of the 'occurrences in *Silex Scintillans* of Tillyard's five characteristics of the Elizabethan age', and we are told that the resemblance to Henry Vaughan in these ideas is borne out by analysis of his poems, as if ideas might 'resemble' poetry! What a good deal of the argument amounts to is that there are many expressions in Vaughan's verse consonant with orthodox Christianity, which nobody has ever denied, in spite of the blurb's statement that prevailing opinion is that Vaughan was a believer in the hermetic heresy. The most disquieting thing is that Garner never reaches the stage of literary criticism, and for this reason it is difficult to know at which public the book is aimed. Who is helped by the conclusion that Vaughan's pessimism is closely allied with that of Augustine and Paul, or the statement (rounding off nine pages or so of discussion) that 'what this amounts to is that, looking at the body of Vaughan's work as a whole, one sees the largest and most important part of it made up of sacred verse.' Dr Garner had experience as a lawyer and a tank commander before he turned to literary studies, and seems to have drawn his prose style from one profession and his method of dealing with awkward facts from the other. There are far too many sentences which no student of literature should be required to read, for example 'Moreover, the memory of lost innocence and the mathematical grounds of Ptolemaic astronomy which once justified these two notions (of pre-existence and the cosmos as spheres or rings) in common experience cannot be made, as insights of the religious imagination, to stand on the independent validity of their formulation as actual descriptions of phenomena.' For an example of the way Garner bulldozes over awkward facts, the reader might turn to pages 97 and 98 where he will see that the passage from Hooker adduced to explain away a hermetic passage of Vaughan in fact runs contrary to it and actually supports the case for Vaughan's having been a heretic.

In some technical details the book does not reach the standards we might expect of a learned work. The index is incomplete, there is no bibliography, and the proof-reading is ineffectual against grammatical slips, mis-spellings and faulty ascriptions.

All this may leave the impression that nothing good can be said of Dr Garner's work, but that is not so. The fact that, in spite of a welter of learned articles, this is the first full-length book on Vaughan, points surely to peculiar difficulties in the subject. One cannot treat Vaughan adequately without coping with hermeticism, which is not in itself a study that many scholars would find rewarding; moreover Vaughan's poetic habits require a greater critical delicacy than do those of Donne and Herbert, and his emotional set towards experience is less likely than is theirs to arouse widespread sympathetic understanding. The book under review is a

## Book Reviews

pioneering work in a sense, even if we cannot call it an original one; and I intend no sarcasm when I say that it is something in this field to have produced a model of how not to tackle Vaughan. And if his general thesis fails, Garner says some good things in the process; his is the most adequate answer I have seen to the illogical but persuasive attempt of Kermode to separate Vaughan's poetry from his religious experience, and he is undoubtedly correct in pointing out that Vaughan refused to lay claim to heights of religious experience that he had not attained; this self-restraint makes the difference between a religious poet, which Vaughan was, and a religious versifier such as Crashaw.

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A. W. RUDRUM

AN INTRODUCTION TO BEOWULF. R. W. Chambers. Revised edition by C. L. Wrenn. *Cambridge University Press*, 1959.

THE quality of compendious works of reference on *Beowulf* available in English has always been a good deal lower than one could wish. Students who have no German have always been at a serious disadvantage and for them Klaeber's edition of the poem and Chambers's *Introduction* have been the standbys.

As a result, the fact that this latter work has been long out of print has been a matter for concern and its unavailability for some twenty years has seemed to many of us a real deprivation. At last the Cambridge University Press has reissued the work in a 'revised' form, and it seemed that a useful tool were once more in our hands.

For this we must be grateful. And it may seem churlish, after this admission has been made, to go on to complain that the book is less useful than we hoped it might be. Professor Wrenn has, in fact, hardly 'revised' the book at all. He has, as we shall see, added much fresh and useful material in order to bring it up to date in certain particulars. But he has evidently not had the opportunity of altering either the content or the direction of Chambers's original text, and we must regret that a book now so old appears in a reprint which allows of little modification of its conclusions in the light of some twenty-eight years of scholarship. Nor is this all: the direction of *Beowulf* studies has changed markedly in this period and much of Chambers's material, especially that of the 'sources and analogues' kind, is now of little real interest to most scholars and students.

From the very first, the book has had a rather strange history, a history which, in part at least, explains its rather heterogeneous and even amorphous character. It may be useful to summarise this history, because the present revision seems to carry on, through another hand, the process of patching and adding which Chambers himself began.

The first edition appeared in 1921 and consisted of four sections. The first, containing three chapters, gave an account of the poem's historical elements, the non-historical elements and theories of origin, date and structure of the poem. This forms the kernel of the book, and the remaining chapters, though not so designated, are really appendices, supplying material on the Offa-saga, the Finn story, and other ancillary matter.

In the second edition of 1932, this material was brought up to date by the addition of a fifth part which reviewed recent work and supplied supplements to existing chapters. The miscellaneous nature of the first edition was thus preserved and even accentuated. The patchwork was already rather bewildering.

And now we have a third revision—that undertaken by Professor Wrenn.

That this revision follows the same general lines as the earlier ones gives the book at least the merit of consistency, though it certainly does not make it any easier to use. We are given a reprint of the material of the second edition, with the addition of a sixth part—'Recent Work on *Beowulf*'—divided into sections dealing with Sutton Hoo, the manuscript and text, the genesis and dating of the poem and historical and legendary material. To this are added some pages of 'additional notes' and the bibliography has been brought up to date by the addition of another supplement. The whole is rounded out by an 'all-inclusive index'.

Even from this bald account, the unsatisfactory form of the book will be apparent. That it contains a great deal of valuable material, much of it unobtainable elsewhere in English, is unquestioned, but it must be admitted that the book is now wearing rather thin and that we can no longer regard it as the kind of reference book which students will find easy to use and unfailingly valuable when used. There are, in the light of modern *Beowulf* studies, too many gaps and too much material that is, frankly, dated—such as part III of Chambers's original. Perhaps all this was inevitable. The possibility of a thoroughgoing revision could hardly be entertained, and a second hand could scarcely be expected to dismantle and reassemble Chambers's complicated and structurally unsatisfactory second edition. This could have been done only by the author who is, of course, no longer alive.

We must be grateful to Professor Wrenn for undertaking a difficult task and doing it as well as circumstances allowed. But—as we now realise—we might well question the wisdom of revising and reissuing the book at all. What is really called for is a new book of reference which covers the ground in a more systematic way and approaches its subject with modern attitudes to the poem and its problems in mind. It is a melancholy fact that we must admit that Chambers's deservedly well-known and respected book will no longer do for our students. It awaits a successor and the present revision does no more than fill the gap until that successor arrives.

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G. H. RUSSELL

SIR GAWAIN AND THE GREEN KNIGHT. A new translation by B. Stone. *Penguin Books*, 1959.

THE growing list of translations of English material which Penguin Books have included in their well-known series is a matter for satisfaction. Following upon their Chaucer and *Piers Plowman*, they now give us the work of the third great poet of the late fourteenth century in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* in a translation by Mr Brian Stone, who unfortunately appears on the cover as 'P. Stone'.

Mr Stone's intention, as he tells us, is to supply us with a translation 'both in modern English and in the original metre'. We recognise at once that he has gone about this task with great care and conscientiousness and his long 'Note on the Translation' seeks to explain to the reader the peculiar difficulties encountered in rendering this poem and his methods of attempting to master those difficulties. His theory seems to be most succinctly summarised when he writes:

But archaism will not do for *Sir Gawain* because the syntax of the original, as distinct from the vocabulary, is already almost modern: better to print the original in modernised spelling, with accompanying glossary, than to offer a few arty archaisms and call the result transla-



## Book Reviews

tion. Nor will plain modern English suffice; because *Sir Gawain* is a highly wrought poem of great elegance and rich colour, so rich that at times one feels the need to have every episode and scene embroidered in tapestry; the poet himself created a special poetic diction, in which conscious archaism played some part. Plain English . . . would kill both the poem's harsh force and its sumptuous artistry. . . .

I confess that, as I read through this note and saw Mr Stone's discussion of various attempted renderings of several passages, my apprehension grew. No one would wish to call in question the exacting nature of the task set any translator bold enough to tackle this sophisticated and difficult poem. But Mr Stone's theory and practice seemed to ensure that an already formidable task would become an almost impossible one. For him the translator's task is to attempt to recreate the effect of a verse which he describes as 'exotic and densely fashioned' in the manner of a Hindu temple.

I should be prepared to call in question this characterisation of the nature of the poem's verse, but I should not wish to disagree about the difficulties raised by any attempt to render the poem in accordance with such theories. For the poem has its own highly developed poetic, a poetic which its poet handled with an assurance that did not always exempt him from resorting to a tortured and tortuous syntax and a strained and obscure vocabulary which, alone or in combination, make this poem so difficult and knotty.

Of all this Mr Stone is aware, and he sets out to reproduce something of this clotted fullness and complexity in his version. The result, it seems to me, is failure. Indeed, I should judge that failure was inevitable simply because the task that he set himself seems to require at once the accurate perceptions of a specialist in Middle English and the creative powers of a major poet. We may question whether we are likely to find such a person, and we may, without disrespect, question whether Mr Stone is such a person.

I find the translation unsatisfactory on several counts. In the first place, Mr Stone's attempt to reproduce the poetic of this piece of Fourteenth Century North West Midland verse seems to me to give to the poem an outlandish quality quite different from that which it must have had for even a Southern contemporary reader. Then again, there seems to have been lost almost all trace of the characteristic vigour and fertility of the poet. These have been replaced by a form of verse that is often merely odd, and sometimes maladroit.

There is, too, the question of accuracy upon which Mr Stone lays such stress in his introduction. In a short review like this, there is no space available for more than one or two examples. But these seem to me typical of a disturbingly large number of places where the translation, for all Mr Stone's striving, seems seriously to misrepresent the tone and even the sense of the original:

& syten riche forth runnen to reche honde-selle  
becomes

Then lords and ladies leaped forth, largesse distributing.  
and

Thus per stondes in stale pe stif kyng his-seluen  
Talkkande bifore pe hy3e table of trifles ful hende  
appears as

Erect stood the king, stately of mien,  
Trifling time with talk before the topmost table.

and

Dayntes dryuen per-wyth of ful dere metes,  
Foyssoun of pe fresche, & on so fele disches  
pat pine to fynde pe place pe peple bi-forne  
For to sette pe sylueren pat sere sewes halden,

is rendered

Then delicacies and dainties were delivered to the guests,  
Fresh food in foison, such freight of full dishes  
That space was scarce at the social tables  
When the broth was brought in in bowls of silver.

We must sympathise with Mr Stone in his difficulties. Perhaps few other poems present their translators with problems of such complexity. Yet I cannot but feel that a translation on quite other lines would have been more successful. Certainly, this translation will not do, and I cannot believe that it will give to the readers of the Penguin translations a genuine impression of the quality of this most remarkable of Middle English poems.

University of Sydney

G. H. RUSSELL

THE BUSINESS OF CRITICISM. Helen Gardner, Clarendon Press: Oxford University Press, 1959, pp. viii + 157.

Miss Gardner will be known to many readers of this journal for her intelligent and sensitive study of T. S. Eliot's later poetry and for her scholarly editing of Donne's *Divine Poems* and of *The Sonnets of Thomas Alabaster*. In *The Business of Criticism* she turns from the practice of academic criticism to a consideration of its aims, methods and spirit as she sees them after some thirty years' teaching experience in Oxford. An invitation to give three lectures to London University students engaged in literary research led to the writing of *The Profession of a Critic*; another invitation to give the Riddell Memorial Lectures for 1956 at King's College, Newcastle, led to the writing of a further set of three lectures, *The Limits of Literary Criticism*. These two sets of lectures now make up *The Business of Criticism*.

Though the two sets of lectures were designed for very different audiences they have a good deal in common and to some extent complement each other. As Miss Gardner says in her Preface:

Both argue the necessity of an historical approach to works of literature and the twin necessity of recognizing the historical nature of our own approach. Both are concerned with the nature of revelation, which if it is to take place at all, must do so in a certain place and at a certain time, but, if it is a true revelation, cannot be bounded by its circumstances. Both are pleas for a certain measure of scepticism, which, while we pursue with our utmost energy and intelligence different paths towards the 'meaning' of what we read, will preserve us from thinking that the meaning can be exhausted by our effort. . .

In general Miss Gardner is an intelligently ladylike conformist, in temper and outlook unmistakably academic and conservative. Not surprisingly she views many of the recent developments in the world of literary scholarship and criticism with distaste. Her lectures to post-graduate students endeavour to account for her feeling of disquietude, suggest the kind of criticism she prefers, and, in doing so, exhibit its characteristic virtues which are real and not unattractive but are also distinctly limited.

Literary criticism in this century, she complains, has become increasingly

## Book Reviews

professionalised. Its elaborate techniques and its esoteric vocabularies make it almost unintelligible except to initiates, disciples or rivals, and editors of professional journals. "A certain severity and strenuousness reigns," leading to a quite unladylike tendency to make dogmatic, polemical, and tendentious pronouncements as though the critic thought of himself as some absolute and authoritarian ruler, wielding the sceptre, laying down the law, and bullying his readers. Though Miss Gardner is herself a professional scholar, the kind of critic she admires is the enthusiastic amateur of taste who reads for fun, not degrees, and writes for fellow-enthusiasts—critic and common reader alike are gentlemen-amateurs. Out of a long and loving acquaintance with a text and after much pondering, the gentlemen-amateur can sometimes say something about it that helps others to see its virtues in a new light. Enthusiasm to be sure must be kept well in control by bringing to bear upon novel interpretations the results of sound scholarship, some of it highly learned and technical. On the whole, Miss Gardner believes her ideal critic is best employed in descriptive and elucidatory exposition. He should put forward his suggestions tentatively in the consciousness that works of art that really matter seem to be inexhaustibly rich in meanings, so that no single critic could ever suppose he was saying the last word about any particular work. Though instead of wielding a sceptre and delivering judgment he carries a torch and illuminates his subject and his reader's mind, the torchbearing critic often needs to be equipped with a varied range of scholarly techniques and must be well acquainted with everything published on his subject by other scholars, but never forgets that scholarship is not an end in itself, but the means towards an end, i.e., an intelligent, informed, and sensitive appreciation of the qualities of a poem or a play or a novel. Displays of learning, *expertise*, originality, and personality are to be deprecated.

As an academic teacher of long experience, Miss Gardner believes it is unwise to make any attempt to train critical sensibility or taste except by very indirect and informal methods. One learns to read, she believes, only by reading. "Young people should be encouraged to read widely, voraciously, and indiscriminately. . . . True personal discrimination or taste develops slowly and probably best unconsciously. . . . Knowledge begins in wonder and wonder will find and develop its own discipline. . . . exercises in selecting the good and rejecting the bad by the application of stock critical formulas" she believes likely to stunt the growth of taste, because "a mind which is concerned with being right, which is nervously anxious not to be taken in, which sits in judgment, and approaches works of passion and imagination with neatly formulated demands, is inhibited from the receptiveness and disinterestedness which are the conditions of aesthetic experience."

Though her ideal academic critic will take a lively interest in contemporary writing, he will be less eager to give voice to his immediate impressions than the literary journalist or the ambitious young writer pushing the fortunes of a particular school or movement, and he may have little to say about it to his students, believing that his primary task is to help them to experience more fully the appeal of works that have long been accepted as important by the judicious common reader.

How to keep pure scholarship in its proper place, how to use it intelligently and tactfully to suggest profitable lines of exploration and sometimes to provide the evidence that makes critical judgment possible—this is admittedly a major problem for the literary critic and the academic teacher. As she says in her Preface, Miss Gardner finds the historical approach or approaches congenial and valuable, and in her second and third lectures she demonstrates very convincingly some of the possible uses of his-

## Book Reviews

torical scholarship in the service of criticism. She also examines Mr Cleanth Brooks' interpretation of a well-known speech from *Macbeth* and without acrimony shows how he leads himself astray by making so much of a motif he thinks important that he fails to notice other elements more important still and more closely linked to the rest of the play. More interesting still is her effort, unsuccessful, to work out an interpretation of Donne's poem *Aire and Angels* that allows us to accept it as a self-consistent, integrated, organic whole.

In all this there is much good sense, much that is well calculated to provoke lively and profitable discussion, and also much that must have seemed far from satisfying to post-graduate students of London University primarily interested like herself in criticism as practised by the academic teacher. At first sight it seems surprising that a critic who sees so clearly the wisdom of situating *Hamlet* and *Aire and Angels* in their many contexts, should pay so little attention to the contexts, intellectual, social, and historical, in which academic literary scholarship has been developing since she herself was a post-graduate student. She may very well deplore some of these developments and wish for radical changes in the immediate future, but is she likely to achieve anything by exhorting today's specialists-in-training to avoid the hazards and deformations of specialisation, to become experts and yet remain men, to turn professional and yet retain all the zest and the playfulness of the amateur? What she fails to see, or, at any rate, to discuss, is the old problem of the aims and spirit of undergraduate courses: are we primarily concerned with the civilizing of young people through a broadly liberal and non-professional education or with the preparation of some of them for careers as scholars, specialists, experts? And is the training undergone by the potential specialist in the graduate school best fitted to help him to become in turn a lively, sensitive, and resourceful academic tutor of undergraduates seeking general education? In part the problems merely illustrate in miniature some of the basic problems of our civilization, with its multiplicity of lonely, alienated experts, and its lack of common forms and traditions, and it is only in this broader context that the special problems of the scholar-critic can be profitably discussed.

If we turn for a moment to the undergraduates who will supply most of the schoolteachers of English as well as the professional scholars, editors, bibliographers, and university teachers, it would seem to many of us altogether too optimistic to do nothing more than encourage them to educate themselves by wide, voracious, and indiscriminate reading. They need to develop some familiarity with and some mastery of the chief tools and techniques of scholarly criticism, and through intelligent discussion of the work of other critics as well as analytical comment on their own essays, they must be helped to recognize the intelligent and tactful application of these techniques. Tact, intelligence, flexibility of mind, sensibility, common sense—true, one cannot learn them by rule and rote. Nor can one develop the ability to discriminate between good and inferior writing and to find plausible and persuasive grounds for one's decisions with quite the same ease and certainty as one can learn to type or ski or swim. It is true, none the less, that though one can teach oneself to type, to swim, to ski, to sprint, to pole-vault, one usually gets better results with a good coach. With all its defects of methodology (and it is certainly far from perfect), *Practical Criticism* did break new ground and it does offer some illuminating studies of the many ways in which intelligent, serious, and well-read people often misread literary texts. Amongst the causes of trouble, approaching a text with the wrong expectations, with strong, unexamined, and disabling prejudices, seems to be very common, even in readers who have read widely, vorac-



iously, and indiscriminately. Wide reading may, indeed, confirm us in our prejudices and our bad habits, unless we are compelled to report to an experienced tutor our impressions as readers and to set out as fully as we can how we have arrived at our decisions about the nature and the quality of our text. Good coaches surely know that under guidance students can learn to recognize and discard many of their unexamined prejudices, can learn to approach a poem or a play from an unfamiliar set of assumptions and expectations, can, in short, become more flexible. And, in just the same way, students can begin to see the possibility of a variety of critical approaches and systems, can learn in practice how to assume one or other for the time being in order to discover how much it can be made to yield in this or that set of circumstances. Without unsettling students for ever, we can help them to the use of a method that is consciously provisional, speculative, and dramatic, and we can exhibit the sad results of using a method as though it were inspired and absolute, turning it into doctrine and dogma. We can encourage imaginative scepticism and dramatic irony—in the spirit of Plato and Montaigne—to keep the mind athletic and on the stretch.

Following a lead Miss Gardner herself gives—that it is impossible to exhaust the meanings discoverable in a great work of art and that each of us should be humbly satisfied to make his own necessarily limited contribution towards an ideally perfect reading without pretending to have actually reached it—can we not make much greater use of group-discussions as a means of studying literature in universities? Not, let me hasten to add, as a substitute for lectures and individual interviews, but as a supplement to them. Six or eight reasonably intelligent, earnest, and articulate students with a couple of lecturers pooling their experiences as readers, comparing and contrasting, referring back to the text, and examining every suggestion in the light of the group's opinion—this way of studying together brings home to every individual taking part how much he has missed in his own reading of a poem, how many possible and profitable approaches may be used, how apparently irreconcilable differences in judgment may be progressively modified and refined and sometimes reconciled. In the process of discussion students gradually learn how to put forward interpretations in an undogmatic form as an invitation to others to inspect, examine, confirm, or modify. They may also learn how to listen, how to hold several possibilities in mind, and how to suspend judgment when the evidence is incomplete or inconclusive. This kind of discussion also develops inevitably during the production of a play (except where the director is insufferably autocratic) and especially during the writing or rewriting of a play amongst a group of drama students. Real work in the theatre, intelligently directed and disciplined work, not just 'larking about,' might indeed play a much greater part in the training of undergraduates.

Looking back to the days when Richards, Leavis, John Crowe Ransom, Allen Tate, R. S. Crane, Kenneth Burke, and Yvor Winters were post-graduate students, when *Ulysses*, *The Waste Land*, *Women in Love*, *Les Faux-Monnayeurs*, and *The Magic Mountain* were new, may bring back to mind two important features of our situation over the last thirty years or so. When Miss Gardner deplores the severity, the strenuousness and the note of urgency in the writing of some critics, when she objects to polemical, tendentious, and evangelical overtones, it is only fair to remark that all of us have had an overdose of propaganda and indoctrination, not only during two world wars but in between the wars and during the prolonged cold war, so that we are very understandably more than a little tired of Enthusiasm, much as our ancestors were after the Civil War and the Rule of the Saints. None the less, we should bear in mind that in the 'twenties and 'thirties it

was widely held amongst the young that revolutionary developments in art, psychology, anthropology, poetry, and the novel were in need of exposition and defence in face of the hostility of an older generation (and academic critics should occasionally put on sack-cloth and ashes and read what some of their venerable predecessors had to say about Eliot, Lawrence, Joyce, Braque, Picasso, Moore, Sutherland, and so on). Again, the ominous development of an 'admass' civilization with its threat to 'minority culture' was not an invention of F. R. Leavis and the *Scrutiny* group, nor was their campaign to seek effective ways of meeting the threat through reforms in education entirely misdirected or foolish, even though it inevitably seemed to some of the establishment a little unnecessary and unfashionably serious. Perhaps we have entered a different period since those days; the need to be strenuous, severe, and earnest may have passed. After all, we now have UNESCO, scholarships for all the talented, universal culture, TV, and possibly we no longer carry the dead weight of discredited elders. If Oxford, like the rest of England, never had it so good, perhaps weapons and armour can be stowed away and we may all enjoy the pleasures of civilized leisure.

Out here in Australia it is notoriously difficult to know what changes have taken place in English conditions, but at the risk of sounding like a voice from the outmoded and unhappy past, I would surmise that, even today, what post-graduate students do and think, even when they have private incomes, is still largely determined by their earlier training as schoolboys with university places and scholarships in view, by their undergraduate courses and the competition for scholarships, grants, and fellowships, by the demands and expectations of examiners, and by the standards used by university committees when making academic appointments. In this context, is it certain that a strong demand exists for the disinterested yet lively amateur who can be picked out quite easily from amongst the solemn professionals because he so obviously enjoys literature and exercises a free intelligence? And have English universities thought hard enough about the practical changes they might have to make if they once decided we need a greater number of such admirable amateurs?

Unfortunately Miss Gardner's interests do not seem to lie in this direction. It is impossible to guess what she knows or thinks of some of the many experiments made in the teaching of the humanities—in the General Education courses at Chicago, St. John's College, Reed College, Columbia College, and North Staffordshire, to name just a few. What does she think of Sarah Lawrence College, of F. R. Leavis's proposals for an Honours School, of V. da Sola Pinto's reorganization of the School of English at Nottingham? Are Stephen Potter's radical criticisms of English literature in *The Muse in Chains* without substance? And so on.

Though it may be doing her an injustice to say so, a reading of her lectures suggests that, good torchbearer as she may be, no torch of hers will ever set fire to any old men's whiskers.

University of Western Australia

W. A. EDWARDS

MODERN ENGLISH: A Self-Tutor or Class Text for Foreign Students. Neile Osman, Sydney. Angus & Robertson, 1959, pp. xvi + 240.

THOUGH 'home' students with enough English to read explanations in simple sentence patterns and a friend to help them with pronunciation should find this book very helpful, its design is especially suitable for class use. The arrangement of the chapters suggests oral work in class. The imperative and the continuous present tenses of the verb are introduced before the

## Book Reviews

simple present. 'Open the door, please' and 'I am walking' come before the less immediate 'I work'. An added advantage of this order of presentation is that negative and interrogative can be introduced early in their simpler form. The arrangement is throughout one of increasing variety of sentence pattern. As plenty of practice is given with each new pattern, this 'graded syntax' should encourage learners to 'think in English'.

The emphasis is, more than in most grammars, on spoken English. Short forms such as *can't*, *don't*, *it'll*, *doesn't* are frequent and idiomatic question tags ('You're working, aren't you?') and ways of answering questions without being brusque ('Yes, I am', 'No, I'm not') appear early. 'I'm going too . . .' receives more attention than *shall/will* in a discussion of the future. (How many of us have noticed that a full description of our uses of 'I'll' and 'I'm going to' reintroduces some of the old complication of the uses of *shall* and *will*?) Attention is, however, given to rules of spelling as, for instance, in the formation of *-ing* forms of the verb.

Our traditional grammars have been mainly concerned with written language, seldom mentioning that spoken and written forms of a language may differ or exploring the relationship between the two. A grammar which among other things faces some of the problems of spoken language can therefore be of theoretical linguistic interest. Is it significant that all but three of the eighteen chapters in this book deal entirely or in part with the verb? Even then the verb is not completely described. (The writer warns us that this is not a complete description of English). We may even question such an obvious statement as (p.83) 'Naturally, when an action is completed, the action happened in the past'. Sentences of the type 'It's time he made up his mind' are idiomatic and likely to be met early by a learner. They show a perfective aspect which is not really past. The past form in English seems to include a subjunctive function among its uses. The clerk who asks 'What was the name, please?' does not require a past name or even imply (unless as a polite fiction) that you have mentioned it already. To complicate matters, 'There's a whistle. That'll be the postman' contains a future form which is really past in meaning, again with a subjunctive force. An adequate description of English is, of course, an urgent and recognized need for teaching.

Some of the inadequacies of traditional discussions of English are overcome in this book. For example proper attention is given to adverbs of time. A chapter of drill in 'mid-position' adverbs (like *always*, *never*) should help to eliminate the unidiomatic 'Always I have difficulty with word order'.

This book reflects the fact that there is very little accidence and a great deal of syntax to learn in English. It will thus be helpful to German-speaking learners. Ideally a course should be designed to fit the requirements of speakers of a particular language. A class whose first language is French will have different problems with word order from a class of German speaking students. But a book like this must forego the tailored course, more justifiably because in Australia the students in most courses will be of varying linguistic background any way.

Mr Osman is perhaps unwise in sometimes giving examples of wrong usage in his text. Though they are clearly labelled 'This is wrong', seeing them in print could set up undesirable engrams in the learner's mind.

If this book is used outside Australia, a modification of the sentence-stress patterns recommended may be necessary. In a sentence like 'I want a cup of coffee, please' the difference between Australian and English stress may be conveniently described as the difference between four iambs and two second paeons.

University of Canterbury

G. W. TURNER

## Book Reviews

MARIVAUX, *Arlequin poli par l'amour*, ed. Robert and Thelma Niklaus. University of London Press, 1959, pp. 104.

THIS volume is one of a series of French texts for students being published under the general editorship of Professor Niklaus of the University of Exeter. Pleasantly bound, clearly printed, and in the case of *Arlequin*, discreetly illustrated, the volumes are much superior in presentation to the normal run of such publications. The critical apparatus is equally good. In his preface, Professor Niklaus calls attention to his editorial policy, which has been to invite individual editors to determine for themselves 'in the light of their own specialized knowledge' the critical approach best suited to their particular task. As a result each editor, while drawing to the full on the most recent discoveries of literary scholarship, has presented his material in a stimulatingly personal manner.

Professor and Mrs Niklaus's own editing of *Arlequin poli par l'amour* is a case in point. In a brief study of Marivaux's life and character, they show that the distinctive qualities of his work derive partly from the sophisticated society of which he was a sympathetic but penetrating observer, partly from the personalities and traditions of the company for which he wrote, partly from his own original genius. Their comments on the play itself, and the notes they give to assist in its production, stress the play's elusive charm, the strange and haunting blend of comedy and pathos, of fairy tale enchantment and authentic human feeling. Marivaux's make-believe is not a child's longing for things unknown; it is the imaginative evocation of a world in which the most exquisite of human emotions may find their true reward. To communicate this very personal vision, Marivaux forged a language of his own:

'le mélange le plus bizarre de . . . sentiments alambiqués et de diction populaires'

according to La Harpe, but one which the editors convincingly defend.

The text used is a reproduction of that published by Vve Guillaume in 1723, which is probably the first edition. Typographical slips have been corrected and minor alterations in layout effected. With the text is included the music composed for the play by Jean-Joseph Mouret; and some useful but not too bulky notes indicate variants or special meanings. A list of useful dates, another of Marivaux's other plays, a bibliography of previous editions of *Arlequin*, and of recent critical studies dealing with Marivaux, have been added as an appendix.

Other volumes are indicated as being in preparation. It would be a very pleasant thing if these were to include some of the more neglected works of French literature, of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in particular. Fontenelle's *Dialogues des morts*, Saint Evremond's sparkling *Conversation du maréchal d'Hocquincourt avec le père Canaye*, even some of Marmontel's *Contes Moraux* (otherwise almost unobtainable) might well be considered to come within the scope of this series, and thus saved from unmerited oblivion.

University of Canterbury

N. M. LEOV

THE BACKGROUND OF THE FRENCH CLASSICS. Gowan, C. D'O. London, Harrap, 1960, pp. 190.

THIS is rather a slight book—but then it claims, most disarmingly, to be nothing more. It doffs an apologetic cap to the historians, disclaims any original research, and professes itself to be a mere 'introduction', a 'quick



## Book Reviews

sketch' aimed at making the *Grand Siècle* 'rapid and interesting reading'. Originally delivered as lectures to the boys at Eton, it now addresses itself to the general public. It uses the *Carte de Tendre* as end-papers, enlivens the text with black-and-white illustrations, and furnishes a vigorously told and often entertaining narrative copiously supplied with anecdote. In so far as the age of Louis XIV can be digested by Upper Sixth pupils, this book, in providing a highly readable political and social background to the period, has brilliantly succeeded in its modest aim.

There is, throughout, a hearty masculinity of treatment. Marie de Medici is a 'fat, idle, stubborn Italian who to her dying day never learned to speak French properly' (p. 37), Louis XIII in a single year endures at the hands of his physician '47 bleedings, 212 purges and 215 enemas' (p. 64), Richelieu 'suffered all his life with piles and carbuncles' (p. 66), the Brinvilliers and La Voisin poisoning exploits are featured with relish (pp. 147-155), while Louis XIV's physical decline (perpetual laxatives, dental extractions and the like) is given in all too ample detail (pp. 168-9). If this is designed to 'give artistic verisimilitude to an otherwise bald and unconvincing narrative', the said narrative might perhaps shine best in its own light. History has its dignity.

The reviewer has reservations, too, about a book which quotes ably and competently, but without source references—a book which retails, *pari passu*, reputable history with the anecdotes of that incorrigible gossip-monger Tallemant des Réaux—a book which 'covers' in barely three pages the 'glory' of Louis XIV and systematically 'debunks' the *Grand Monarque* and the *Grand Siècle* in general. As an *entrée en matière* for Sixth Formers, this book may well have a function, a useful function, to perform. Serious students will still be well advised to read the more solid and scholarly *Introduction to Seventeenth Century France* by Professor Lough.

R.T.S.

MALRAUX. Geoffrey Hartman. London, Bowes & Bowes, 1960.

This recent book in the series 'Studies in Modern European Literature and Thought' is the first I have seen with the new type-setting, presumably designed to avoid the strain on the eyes imposed by the former one. It is however unfortunate that this should have been achieved at such a cost to the text, for this somewhat bulkier volume contains only two-thirds of the number of words to be found in earlier books in this series. To compress all Malraux into some twenty-five thousand words must indeed be a most frustrating experience, and if the author has been a victim of editorial policy he has a right to our sympathy.

Mr Hartman gives a very full Bibliography and is apparently in the fortunate position of having access to works long out of print and virtually unobtainable (see Note No. 9 concerning *Lunes en papier* and *Royaume Farfelu*). In view of this fact, one can only regret that reasons of space have prevented their consideration. He also gives a comprehensive list of works devoted to Malraux to which the names of Boisdeffre and Savane might perhaps have been added. For the rest, a wide culture has been brought to bear upon the 'cas Malraux' and extremely pertinent quotations from Rilke, Nietzsche and Heidegger 'situate' him in the intellectual climate of his time, while perhaps the most fertile suggestion put forward concerns the possibility of considering his work as being in the nature of a long dialogue with Spengler. His place in the company of such creative writers as Valéry, Mann and Eliot is also most interestingly discussed.

## Book Reviews

In his preface Mr Hartman writes: 'This little volume suffers, doubtless, from many omissions and I regret not being able to treat Malraux's political thought more directly.' Lack of space is a most exasperating affliction, but I wonder just why that particular aspect was chosen for sacrifice, especially when space was found for Malraux's post-war political speeches (pages 90-91). To eliminate political thought from a study of Malraux is surely on a par with describing vertebrates while omitting all reference to their skeletons.

For political thought is the skeleton which supports Malraux's greatest works. If one will agree to deny the title of novel to *La Tentation de L'Occident* and to *Les Noyers de L'Altenburg*, then four out of five of his novels deal with actual historical political insurrection or resistance, with the play of opposing forces and with the life-and-death struggle of peoples in arms against oppression; to approach this type of work from a purely philosophical point of view and to present the personages as steeped in a purely metaphysical 'Angst', to the exclusion of all other factors, is a little disconcerting.

In a work as rich as Malraux's, which invites interpretation on so many levels, it is inevitable that each will select as the major one that approach which best suits his individual temperament, and that therefore to quarrel with Mr Hartman's approach might seem unwarrantable subjectivism, yet I submit that the excision of the political skeleton imposes a grave distortion upon our view of his art, for with it is also lost the whole epic quality of the work, the call to heroism which cast a spell over a whole epoch. No one reading this book could suspect that Malraux wielded an extraordinary influence over an entire generation, for Mr Hartman has firmly anchored Malraux's novels in the realm of the extra-temporal, totally sundered from our age and its problems, and this as a means of dealing with a man whose work is virtually all 'expérience vécue' (a fact one could not really deduce from the Biographical data provided) can but strike one as a curious choice.

Apart from the novels of Malraux his five major studies on Art are also examined, and here Mr Hartman attempts to assess Malraux's originality in this field (see Note No. 15), and has a number of very illuminating things to say, for example on the situation of Modern Art.

University of Auckland

W. POLLARD

THE PENGUIN BOOK OF FRENCH VERSE: 4. THE TWENTIETH CENTURY, introduced and edited by Anthony Hartley. *Penguin Books*, 1959, pp. liv. + 323.

MR HARTLEY, who edited the Nineteenth century selection in the Penguin Book of French Verse, has now brought out the final volume (no. 4) in this series. Volume 1 has yet to appear; but when it does the complete set should offer a very satisfying and inexpensive collection of French poetry from its beginnings to the middle years of this century.

In this volume Mr Hartley has selected from the work of thirty poets, ranging from Charles Van Lerberghe to Yves Bonnefoy. Pride of place naturally goes to Claudel, Valéry, Apollinaire and St. John Perse, who is magnificently represented by the complete text of *Eloges* and five sections from *Anabase*; and there are typical and individual selections from Péguy, Jammes, Max Jacob, Reverdy, Ponge, Michaux, Char, René-Guy Cadou, Yves Bonnefoy and others. Pierre-Jean Jouve seems to have been included rather reluctantly and is inadequately represented. The biographical-critical

## Book Reviews

note on his work does not mention any of his major publications since 1945. Mr Hartley gives his reasons for ignoring Cocteau and a number of younger writers; but the absence of Pierre Emmanuel is particularly regrettable. Surely one of the real tests of a good anthologist is his ability to make a representative extract from a long poem; and Emmanuel is certainly a test case. A selection of lyrics, from, say, *Visage Nuage*, might not have done full justice to Emmanuel's varied talent, but it would not have been as unfair as his total exclusion. This is an unfortunate omission in an anthology that is otherwise quite generous.

The introduction gives an excellent survey of the development of French poetry over the last fifty years. There are perceptive and illuminating remarks on some of the authors represented and a concise critical account of the development and influence of Dadaism and Surrealism. Mr Hartley shows how both these movements were the logical development of the 19th century's attempt to attribute a transcendental value to the poet's work, and he rightly points out that 'the paradox of the Surrealist movement lies in the fact that, though numbers of poets belonged to it, there is nobody who can be singled out as the archetypal Surrealist. Much less is there an archetypal Surrealist Poem.'

Mr Hartley says that '20th century French poetry [is] more accessible to English contemporaries than was the case in the preceding centuries'. Many would agree that this is so. And yet, on another level, one has only to remember that René Char is the contemporary of W. H. Auden and Yves Bonnefoy of Thom Gunn and D. J. Enright to realise how very different English and French poets are, particularly now, in their fundamental preoccupations and in their expression of them.

University of Tasmania

V. B. SMITH

INTRODUCTION TO EIGHTEENTH CENTURY FRANCE. Lough, J. London, Longmans, Green, 1960.

PROFESSOR LOUGH'S *Introduction to Seventeenth Century France* has already found an assured place in the prescriptions of schools of French everywhere and very deservedly serves as the book for background material on the seventeenth century. The companion volume on the eighteenth century will surely meet with the same success and serve students of that period equally well. The basic structure remains the same, although, as one would expect, one finds a chapter *Literature and Ideas* where for the seventeenth century the heading was *Language and Literature*. Given the particular function of this type of work (namely, to provide Anglo-Saxon students of French literature with a clear picture of the social and political and economic conditions of the great periods of French civilization and thus to enhance their enjoyment of the great literary monuments of these ages) one can only say that Lough comes near perfection. Indeed his success is highly embarrassing to a reviewer. Seeing a Professor of French Literature boldly setting off into the jungle of 18th century French history, one immediately reaches for one's darts and blowpipe in the expectation of an easy victim even for the inexperienced marksman. But Lough finds his way unerringly in the jungle, and comes home unscathed. I doubt if even the professional historians will be able to place a single dart in his flesh. It is no mean feat and one can but admire him.

One can, of course, quibble. There is a sentence on p. 314 which even a Thomas Mann would consider clumsy and awkward, namely, "No doubt it was pleasant for the Philosophes, exposed to the ill-will of the govern-

ment at home which, for instance, authorized the public performance of Palissot's satirical comedy, *Les Philosophes*, in which, under transparent disguises, Diderot and Helvétius were depicted as gallows-birds, to point to the favours which they enjoyed from other governments.' And to speak of the mediocre *Poème sur le désastre de Lisbonne* in the same breath as Chénier's poetry is surely rather hard on the latter. Then, too, the general tone of the book strikes the present reviewer as rather dull and flat. The illustrative extracts from contemporary texts and memoirs are well-chosen, the comments are judicious and clear, but a certain vivacity is lacking and the reader's attention is rarely jogged or goaded. But perhaps this flatness is but one more virtue of the book; perhaps Professor Lough means the student to find the vivacity and the sparkle in the actual texts of Voltaire and Diderot and Marivaux and has contented himself with providing the matt velvet on which the jewels may show to advantage.

University of Tasmania

I. H. SMITH

THE IDEA OF POETRY IN FRANCE, Margaret Gilman, *Harvard University Press*, 1958, pp. vi + 324.

THE sub-title of the late Professor Gilman's book, 'From Houdar de la Motte to Baudelaire', which does not appear on the cover, gives a better idea of its scope. It is a study of the ideas about poetry, among poets and critics, that were current in France during the 18th and 19th century, up to the moment when Symbolism was ready to emerge as a doctrine and in poetic practice.

It is ostensibly a book for the 'general reader', and practically all the prose quotations have been translated into English. But it is of greater value to the serious student, who in turn will be rather annoyed at having to dig out the originals from their matrix. But although Professor Gilman thus falls between two stools, her book is really useful, and contains some extremely interesting details.

It shows us, for example, that many people in the 18th century recognised that poetry was dead, and that something had to be done about it. Consequently there were masses of theory on the subject, ranging from the old quarrel of 'les anciens et les modernes' to the relations between art and reality. But all this produced no poetry (except in the case of Chénier, who came too late from an 18th century point of view); and the poetic spirit manifested itself only in the prose of Rousseau and Bernardin de Saint-Pierre and, later, Chateaubriand.

The most interesting of all theoretical attempts to renew the spirit of poetry was that of Diderot (pp. 48-85). As we might expect from the author of the *Paradoxe*, he was on his guard against excessive sensibility, which 'no longer has any discernment'. He pointed the way, however, to 'a control of sensibility', says Miss Gilman (p. 52) 'not only by judgment, but by imagination and memory'. And if we take 'imagination' here (as I think we can) to refer to poetic imagery rather than to fantasy, he was thus curiously anticipating some much more modern doctrines. The present reviewer's only stricture on this extremely interesting chapter is that it is unduly repetitive. It would have been really first-class if the author had begun with A and gone steadily on to Z in her analysis of Diderot's ideas.

The chapter on 'The Romantic Revolution' is interesting in another way. It reveals the frequent conflict between the poetic doctrines of the Romantics and their poetic practice. How easily, for instance, Lamartine's sup-



posedly unbridled sensibility fell into a conventional mould! It is a pity, however, that Miss Gilman, while rightly observing that Hugo was not, either in his versification or in his poetic practice in general, quite the revolutionary that he imagined himself to be, does not provide some more technical analyses to prove her point. To take one instance of his inner contradictions: in the very line in which he makes his famous boast:

J'ai disloqué ce grand niais d'alexandrin,

his metre is doubly traditional. Not only does this line have a *coupe ternaire* (which was by no means unknown to Racine), but its sixth syllable, *grand*, rhymes with the sixth syllable of the preceding line, (*brigand*; and as the latter is followed by a strong caesura, this classical caesura is perceptible to the ear in the 'revolutionary' line also. Hugo, in innumerable cases, repeats this instinctively (or guiltily) propitiatory gesture to tradition.

The general argument of Professor Gilman's book is that it took more than a century for the old quarrel between form and matter to attain a smooth adjustment. The adjustment consisted in realising that the two are inseparable, that they are virtually one. This at once gives poetry the genuinely creative character that it lacked in the 18th century and, too often, among the Romantics; a character that was not restored by Gautier and the Parnassians, because they still divorced matter and form, giving the latter custody of the children. Once the two are completely united, the word becomes a living thing; the way is prepared not only for Mallarmé, but even for Valéry, whose phrases constitute poetic *acts*, and for whom words often generate ideas.

Professor Gilman does not say all this, of course, for her book stops short at Baudelaire. But she is not to be blamed for this. On the contrary, she thus gives Baudelaire his rightful and meritorious place as the great precursor of Symbolism and its off-shoots. And this, in turn, does justice to the gifted Diderot, as we see on p. 265, where Miss Gilman writes:

'As we look back over the road we have travelled, we realise that the chief articles of Baudelaire's poetic creed had been expressed or adumbrated earlier. Most striking are the parallels with Diderot, to my mind Baudelaire's only peer in the realm of poetic theory during this long period. Diderot, like Baudelaire, was intensely aware of the great central problems of the nature and function of poetry, the relation of art to reality, of matter to form, of imagination to technique.'

It is fair to add that the serious student of French poetry will not be *too* exasperated by all those translations into English. He can track down the originals thanks to the author's copious bibliographical notes at the end of the volume—some 40 pages of them. And there is a useful index.

London

A. R. CHISHOLM

**BIBLIOGRAPHIE DER FRANZOESISCHEN LITERATURWISSENSCHAFT, I, h. von Otto Klapp, Frankfurt, Klostermann, 1960, pp. xlviii + 428.**

THE task of the twentieth century bibliographer of literature is no sine-cure. It reminds one of Dr Johnson's well-known definition of 'lexicographer' as 'a writer of dictionaries: a harmless drudge'. As any librarian knows, the printed page races far ahead of the bibliographer (the Talvart and Place compilation, for example, has, over about forty years, laboriously reached the letter M). And there has been a certain unbalance in the recent

provision of what bibliographical aids we have. The Middle Ages, for instance, have been well served by the bibliographies of Bossuat (1951—with the Supplement in 1955) and Woledge (1953) and the Renaissance by the impressive Cioranescu-Saulnier compilation. The XIXth and XXth centuries were well launched by Thieme (1830-1930) and the continuations, in the same framework, by Dréher-Rolli (1930-1939) and Drévet (1940-49), have been adequate. The gaps left in systematic and centralized bibliography in the field of French were pointed out in 1936 by Mademoiselle Giraud in the Preface to her *Manuel de bibliographie littéraire pour les XVIe, XVIIe, et XVIIIe Siècles français*, (1921-1935, followed by its sequel for the years 1936-45). Her own publication was designed to move forward from Lanson's well-known *Manuel bibliographique de la littérature française moderne 1500-1900*, first published in a complete edition in 1913, and indispensable, though considerably dated, since. The basis, of course, is the *Bibliographie de la France* (though it is a tedious business consulting this vast mass of material, which in any case is of no help in references to periodicals). The Cabeen and Holmes *Critical Bibliography of French Literature*, begun in 1947, is still incomplete after thirteen years. Meanwhile the admirable R.H.L.F. bibliographies, with the annual *Ranoeur tiré à part*, the *Year's Work in Modern Language Studies* (the 1958 volume of which has just come to hand), the *Tables Décennales* published by the *Cercle de Librairie française*, *Biblio* (monthly and annual) and the *Bulletin critique du livre français*, among other tools of trade, offer somewhat scattered material for workers set upon research.

This new publication, which works on the period 1956-58 and envisages a regular series of biennial volumes, will therefore be all the more welcome. Its range is very considerable—in Europe, from Uppsala to Rome and from Dublin to Bucharest, with a wide coverage in U.S.A. and Canada, and extensions even to Australasia (though *Meanjin* might be added to *AUMLA* in the field of French scholarship). It aims, as the *Préface* states, to perform for French somewhat the same service as *L'année philologique* does for classical studies, and within the three years of its mandate it ranges from the early medieval literature to the Butors and Robbe-Grilletts of 1958. It specifically excludes translations, anthologies and school texts, but includes a considerable number of theses, along with complete works, critical editions of texts, monographs, articles in journals, etc.

One might query certain abbreviations—Rhl, for instance, in place of the well-known R.H.L.F., and YbCGL for YCGL, equally established. It seems churlish to rob the London *Contemporary Review* of its CR in favour of *compte rendu*, and RDM is far better known than Rddm. By and large, however, this is a very acceptable new tool of trade, and abbreviation conventions will settle down a little when the series is established. If a reasonably complete and easily handled work like this can achieve the necessary co-operation from the relevant publishing authorities, with a time lag of only two years, it will do great service to French literature studies.

R.T.S.

HELLAS UND HESPERIEN. Gesammelte Schriften zur Antike und zur neueren Literatur. Wolfgang Schadewaldt. *Artemis, Zürich und Stuttgart*, 1960, pp. 1072.

IN his popular work on *The View of Nature in Contemporary Physics* the eminent theoretical physicist, Werner Heisenberg, has pointed to the fact that the most modern streams of scientific thought derive from the mathe-

matics and atomic theory of the Greeks, and has maintained that the characteristic Greek union of abstract thought and practical activity is the permanent source of strength in western culture. Wolfgang Schadewaldt, Professor of Greek at the University of Tübingen, whose miscellaneous writings are now collected under the title *Hellas und Hesperien*, has consistently applied to literature the thought which Heisenberg applies to science—the thought that Hellenism is ‘the entelechy of Europe’, the essential form which persists throughout all deeper or more superficial metamorphoses. Thus the work to which Schadewaldt owes his reputation includes not only books on Pindar and Homer, not only translations of Homer, Sophocles and Aristophanes, but also a considerable contribution to the study of Goethe; while the present volume is almost equally divided between essays on the Greeks and Romans and essays on modern writers.

Schadewaldt is intent on the reciprocal illumination of ancient and modern literature, and we accordingly find in this volume studies of Winckelmann’s relation to Homer and Hölderlin’s relation to Homer and Sophocles; comparisons of *Hamlet* and *Electra*, *King Lear* and *King Oedipus*, *King Oedipus* and *Der zerbrochene Krug*; surveys of modern interpretations of Aristotelian theory and of modern reactions to Greek drama. The continued fruitfulness of the Greek tradition is studied in the music of Stravinsky and Carl Orff; and that same tradition provides a criterion for the assessment of modern technology. One sees that there is no lack of variety in the topics discussed, but the dominant idea of the entelechy of Europe provides a firm sense of direction and unifies the rich diversity of the work.

In detail, of course, there is plenty of room for disagreement. The assumption (p. 759) that *Empedokles auf dem Aetna* is an early version of Hölderlin’s tragedy has been vigorously controverted. One might dispute the suggestion (p. 671) that Hölderlin’s relation to Susette Gontard was subject to the same typical development as his relation to Schiller; and it always seems fanciful and dubious to infer anything at all about Hölderlin’s character from the fact of his insanity (*ibid.*), since we know that this fact can be adequately explained by purely physical causes. In the interesting and valuable essays on the art of translation, the contention that the translator of verse must abandon the metre of the original may be countered by the observation that in the most successful of German verse-translations—Schlegel’s translation of Shakespeare—the original metre is retained. And when, in quite a different connexion, Schadewaldt seems to warn his readers against ‘the Lessings among them and the Lessing in them’ (p. 387), one can hardly refrain from murmuring, with a sigh, that the trouble with the Germans has always been that they have so precious little of Lessing in them or among them.

The list of complaints could be extended, and it might be found to include some rather serious ones. Yet the book as a whole must inspire respect for the wealth of learning and information embodied in it and for the lively spirit of inquiry with which it is imbued. Literary scholarship has in general a deplorable tendency to become narrow and limited in its scope, to degenerate into a mere *Betrieb*, pursued, very often, with a brash self-importance which vainly tries to conceal a basic aimlessness. Schadewaldt is admirably free from any taint of this littleness, and he owes his immunity to the clear perception that specialised knowledge always needs to be supplemented by ‘orientational’ knowledge. ‘This “orientational” knowledge’, he tells us (p. 895), ‘is a liberating knowledge, and it is the knowledge that is proper to culture. For the essence of true culture is in fact freedom: that freedom which accrues to man by virtue of the fact that he does not stand dully in his place, staring only at the ground before

his feet like an animal, but that, though he must first establish a secure control over the space in front of him and around him, he can then direct his gaze into the distance, having the ability and the urge to orientate himself in those two great realms to which, as human beings, we belong: the realm of space and the realm of time—the realm of nature and the realm of history.'

It is because his multifarious interests are guided and co-ordinated by such orientation—because he always works with his eye on the grand perspectives of western culture from Hellas to Hesperia—that Schadewaldt's writings are so alive, and that something of the breath of greatness blows through them.

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M. B. BENN

STEFAN GEORGE: A STUDY OF HIS EARLY WORK. Ulrich K. Goldsmith. *University of Colorado Studies*, Series in Language and Literature, No. 7, 1959.

STEFAN GEORGE is an outstanding example of the belief in the power of the spirit (Geist) to create a world and a type of human being at a time when the condition of society was completely unfavourable to their natural emergence out of the ordinary business of living. Mage-like, he held an absolute conviction that the spirit could triumph over nature and transform life. His conception of the poet was an exalted one—that the poet had in himself the secret springs of life in their creative freshness and purity and through his art immersed others in these. In this sense the poet was an educator, and it was in the carrying-out of this holy mission that George saw the meaning of his life. The poet as spiritual leader of the community, which would model human beings and institutions in accordance with his example and precept—nothing less than this was George's conception of his vocation. To trace his early consciousness of being born to leadership and to regenerate a world which had gone astray is the chief aim of the study under review.

It is only in recent years that it has become possible to see George as he really was and to estimate his achievement as a poet and educator. During his life-time and for some time afterwards his disciples, i.e. the members of his 'Circle', conceived it, consistently if not wisely, as their mission not to attempt an objective and critical interpretation and appraisal of the 'Master', but to monumentalise him so that others might be reborn through contact with the image thus presented to them. If the proof of the pudding is in the eating, we can only judge this policy to have been wrong-headed, for its success was small indeed. Many who could have appreciated George as a poet, even if his new 'religion' would still have left them sceptical, were so irritated by the absolutism and often downright distortion of these books by the 'Circle' that they were blinded to his merits. On the other hand not a few of those who accepted him misinterpreted him. For a great deal of misunderstanding both he and his 'Circle' must accept at least some of the responsibility. In their indiscriminating and uncompromising hostility to all aspects of their age they failed to recognize that they were weakening resistance to the upsurge of barbarism that Hitlerism let loose. Moreover, George's 'religion', though basically antagonistic to Nazism, superficially looked suspiciously like it in certain of its features. Those who claim to be the educators of a community should be able to read the signs of the times and should make every effort to ensure, by



## Book Reviews

speaking clearly, that the effect of their message is not to conjure up a far worse monster than the one they have set out to slay. Since the last war, however, the surviving members of the 'Circle', while remaining completely devoted to and equally uncritical of the message and the person of George—even to the extent of making use of George's poetic formulations in sober every-day conversation, e.g. that a new golden age will dawn in five hundred years—have refrained from distortion and have humbly made available factual material about George and the 'Circle'. In this way Edgar Salin's book *Um Stefan George* (1948) and Robert Boehringer's *Mein Bild von Stefan George* (1951) have performed a valuable service. But above all it is the epoch-making study *Stefan George, Son œuvre Poétique* (1952) by Claude David which, by tracing George's evolution in the context of the 'Circle', assembling all the available data and submitting it to a scrutiny as penetrating as it is sane and balanced, has saved the image of George from its detractors as well as its all too fervent admirers. It is a work which must serve as a point of departure for all further study of George.

But the general luke-warm attitude to George is not due solely to the misguided policy of his disciples; it is the solutions to the ills he castigates in our age that have been responsible for the lack of wider response. Of the disciples, apart from a few whose arrogance perverted any virtues they had, it may be said that the life they led in accordance with the Georgian religion commands respect but was meaningful only in private terms. In other words, rejecting our age *in toto* they were unable to distinguish the good from the bad, and so were without influence and, moreover, were condemned to sterility. At bottom they, and George too, were sensitive spirits who believed that our civilisation had taken a wrong turn and had reached a crisis. In their feeling of exile they are of course in the company of many modern writers who are widely accepted. Their interest for us lies in their revelation of a spiritual dilemma, their limitations in their inability to conceive a new synthesis which would preserve our gains while curing the ills. In the last resort they could only stand aside—as Stoics, unable to change things because they did not recognize what has life and value in the present. George's 'no' to his age was absolute. In the prosperous bourgeoisie no less than the rising proletariat, in our technological-industrial society, whether capitalist or socialist, he saw the end of an age, that which was ushered in at the time of the Renaissance and was based on our heritage of classical antiquity and Christianity. At bottom he is condemning the turn given to civilisation by the rationalism of the eighteenth century. The outcome of this was devotion to progress, which for George was permanent flirtation with the 'other' instead of self-fulfilment within the possibilities of the present moment; also, and in close association with progress, a hypertrophy of the abstract intellect at the cost of the whole man, especially of sensuous oneness with the world and of the vitality which expresses itself in the spirit of adventure (in all of which he is obviously very close to Nietzsche). On the one hand he saw a bourgeoisie devitalized in prosperous ease with a proletariat aspiring to the same condition, and on the other the exclusive functioning of the abstract intellect, both, he thought, equally removed from the true centre which man must be. In his criticism he has without doubt exposed a problem which our industrial civilisation has brought about, and which confronts us with a challenge. The central counter-value he set up was being, i.e. as the antithesis of becoming (progress), and this he found, or thought he found, realized most fully in the Greece of classical times. In Christian dogma he could not believe. His ideas on the renewal of man passed through a

## Book Reviews

number of phases—regeneration through ecstasy, through the primitivism of a barbarian conqueror in war—till they crystallised around the image of antique man. Denying progress, he could only conceive his values as eternal but as withdrawing from history for long periods. These values imply a form of knowledge in which the intellect remains in close touch with sensory experience, the kind that Goethe upheld in scientific investigation when he revolted against the mathematical abstractness of Newtonian physics. The re-birth of man and society in George's terms would mean not only the end of modern material civilisation, but the end of the pursuit of truth by scientific method as we now understand it. Since the mind at a certain stage of its attempt to understand the world seems destined to work abstractly, George's view would mean that man at this point must deliberately renounce the abstract. Whether he could then develop further through a sensory approach, or whether he would have to destroy what he has built up and start again from the primitive is not clear, but we gain very much the impression of an 'eternal recurrence'. This 'putting back the clock' is of course not the sole cause why the response to George has been so slight; the form in which he sought to present his religion, the turning of a real person—Maximin—into a god incarnate offended Christians and left others cold.

Thanks to these publications we have now reached a point from which it should be possible to form a more just estimate of George. Sober studies are still needed on a number of problems: his affinities with Nietzsche, his conception of the Greeks, his attempt in later years to create something like a new classicism, parallels (which he himself would have disputed) between him and his contemporaries, a more detailed aesthetic analysis of his later work. Goldsmith's study is a not unimportant contribution and should stimulate further investigation. It does not deal with the content of George's 'religion', but traces his life and work up to the presentation of the epiphany of Maximin, the god incarnate, in the middle section of *Der Siebente Ring*. His main aim, as he says, is to put beyond doubt George's early will to leadership and to change the world, while his method is to give an account of George's total activity which shows this emerging as the dominant tendency. It is ground traversed by David, who, concerned to reveal everything tentative, every shift of position, every nuance, and to leave question-marks, does not make this tendency stand out so clearly and forcefully. Goldsmith is led to pay more attention than David does to George's very early life and work. Likewise, giving more prominence than David to George's early problem of his relations with the opposite sex and elucidating its reflection in the work (he dwells at length on the figure of Ida Dehmé, née Coblenz), he stresses George's narcissist pre-occupation with himself and works out a conflict between the place of woman in his life and his sense of calling (i.e. to reform the world). It is a question which needs more detailed investigation—to what extent these were the real terms of the conflict and the later hostility towards woman, as well as the attempt to form a male society, not rather an expression of the strengthening of homo-erotic tendencies (touched on by Goldsmith). Goldsmith's central aim leads him, while admitting an influence of Mallarmé on the younger German poet, to stress the differences between the two (David draws attention rather to the affinities). He contrasts Mallarmé's indifference to 'life' and society and his consequent hermeticism with George's desire to reform and his intelligibility.

To demonstrate the extent of George's will to rebuild society in these early years a more ample statement than Goldsmith gives of the poet's attitude to the *l'art pour l'art* movement of the time would be necessary.

## Book Reviews

Light has been thrown on this problem by David in an article in *Universitas* (August 1959). He points out how this doctrine regards art as the only value, mere 'life' and even the human experience which art presents being worthless in itself. George's isolation and apartness is the cause of his adherence to this doctrine. David then goes on to show how George in his next stage of development passed from this attitude to that of the educator who regarded art as a means of educating society, i.e. to a belief in the regenerating effect of art on other human activities. In a remarkably perceptive analysis of the third stage David finds an estrangement which despite differences reminds him of the first. We are not directly concerned here with this third stage since it lies outside the period which Goldsmith treats, but David's account of it quite invalidates the former's contention that it merely consolidates the position reached in the elaboration of the Maximin myth (for which reason Goldsmith stops at this point).

Goldsmith's work is in many ways careful and critical. One is forced to ask, however, whether it was necessary to write a book on the lines of David, cutting it off at the Maximin stage. If he had confined himself to one problem—George's early will to renew the world—he would no doubt have seen it more closely in its relation to the doctrine of art for art's sake. For it is the central problem not only of the early years but of the whole George.

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R. B. FARRELL

A MANUAL OF MODERN GERMAN. Frederick J. Stopp. *University Tutorial Press*, Second Edition, 1960, pp. 619.

G. O. CURME introduced his scholarly and exhaustive grammar of 1905 with a remark by Wilhelm von Humboldt: 'Die Sprache ist kein fertiges, ruhendes Ding, sondern etwas in jedem Augenblicke Werdendes, Entstehendes und Vergehendes'. Like his eminent predecessor, Dr Stopp is aware of the dangers of the 'normative' approach to grammar. His method is descriptive, being based on observations of actual practice from about 1890 right up to the present. Examples are taken from a representative range of modern authors and journalists. The result is a most readable and informative work, which will be warmly welcomed by scholars.

Dr Stopp has divided his book into three sections. Part One covers all major grammatical topics except the subjunctive. Part Two deals with the subjunctive and certain further selected fields in greater detail. The Appendices contain material which does not fit neatly into Parts One and Two (e.g. German grammatical terms). Most of Dr Stopp's examples and explanations will find general acceptance, though the author is occasionally more 'traditional' than might have been expected from his Preface. For example, the Classical declension order: nom., gen., dat., acc., seems hard to justify. We are told that, in adjectives standing alone before a noun in the masculine or neuter genitive, the *-en* ending is 'usually' found (p.53). But *-en* is, in fact, the normal and correct ending today. *-es* is not an alternative (even an 'unusual' one): its use is confined today to a few semi-archaic expressions, such as *reines Herzens*. Likewise the ancient rule that *Wörter* is the correct form for 'unconnected words, rich in variety' (pp. 506 and 581). This 'rule' is observed by few present-day novelists and journalists, *Worte* being the favourite plural in both senses (unconnected and connected words). But despite small weaknesses of this kind, Dr Stopp's manual is, in general, up to date. It will be read by scholars with

## Book Reviews

respect and enjoyment (including the comment that *du* is used among 'tramps, drunks and gaol-birds!').

The book has a dual purpose, as set out in the Preface: 'The work accordingly aims at combining the functions of a graded course, suitable for beginners who can call upon the guidance of an experienced teacher, with that of a reference grammar for more advanced students.' These two aims are not fully compatible, and the book has, in its setting-out, suffered accordingly. It is difficult to imagine a class of beginners who could absorb more than a small part of the material provided. As a reference book, on the other hand, the work falls down on account of its inadequate index and its discursive method. Some grammatical entities (e.g. the declension of nouns) are scattered, in small parts, throughout the book. Despite its many virtues, Stopp's manual is not the equal of Curme's grammar, either in coverage or in method. Curme may be old-fashioned, but his book will have to remain on our shelves for a long time yet.

University of Auckland

J. A. ASHER

HUGO VON HOFMANNSTHAL: GESAMMELTE WERKE IN EINZELAUSGABEN. Edited by Herbert Steiner. S. Fischer Verlag, Frankfurt/Main, 1945-1960, 15 volumes.

WITH the arrival of *Aufzeichnungen* the thick blue line on the shelf comes to an end. Its solidity belies its variety. These fifteen volumes have had a strange story. The first of them appeared in Stockholm while the Fischer Verlag was still in enforced exile. The rest have appeared at intervals while the House of Fischer made its long way home via Amsterdam and finally to Frankfurt. It has long since re-established itself as one of the senior, internationally-minded, conservative (and perhaps a trifle complacent?) publishing houses in the German-speaking world. There is something symbolic in this return of the exile, and it bears directly not only on this edition but on the peculiar pilgrim's progress which Hofmannsthal's reputation has endured since the writer's death in 1929. His ultimate fame was for a long time in question. The spirit of the German age—those times 'von denen', Carl Burkhardt writes, 'er wie kaum ein anderer erkannt hat wie unabwendbar sie seien'—soon caught up with him. The six-volume edition of 1924 could scarcely give a comprehensive picture of Hofmannsthal; with *Der Turm* unfinished, *Arabella*, *Das Schrifttum als Geistiger Raum der Nation*, the Lessing essay and *Wert und Ehre deutscher Sprache* unwritten, and *Ad me ipsum* a heap of notes in his desk drawer. Still less could the three-volume selection of 1934 be anything other than a stop-gap; and the times were by then right out of joint. For Hofmannsthal, part-Jew, all Catholic and Austro-European patriot, was scarcely *tragbar* in the New Order. And he even disappeared from the Salzburg Festival after the *Anschluss*.

His reputation retreated into the shadows and—this is a strange thing—seems to have been transformed back into its early shape, that of Loris and Claudio. This is really rather odd, for Hofmannsthal's name stood high at his death. He himself felt that he was not appreciated during the last decade of his life and Max Rychner reports how, on one occasion, he said: 'Wer will denn überhaupt noch etwas von mir?' But, as Curt Hohoff has reminded us, this was said at a time when the *Kulturpolitiker* Hofmannsthal 'an weithin sichtbarer Stelle wirklich . . . eine Art Statthalter des deutschen Geistes war, getragen von der bewundernden Zustimmung der grossen Schriftsteller und Gelehrten'.



## Book Reviews

At all events, Hofmannsthal's name and fame diminished in the course of the thirties and forties. Perhaps only Kafka suffered more from this particular fate: the anonymity, the distorted or incomplete reputation which comes about when a large proportion of an author's mature work is unknown or hardly accessible.

But there is another factor. Hermann Bahr is reported to have commiserated with Hofmannsthal in having had the ill-fortune not to die when Loris' work was done. Stefan George, one recalls, expressed himself rather mordantly on the same topic. And of course there is a nostalgic fascination about the wonderful years when Hofmannsthal wrote those verses and plays which were, as Alewyn says, 'scheinbar ohne Körper und ohne Schwere, aber zugleich von einer Süßigkeit und Reife, deren man das Deutsche vorher nicht für mächtig gehalten hätte'.

For more than a decade, Hofmannsthal's reputation was largely sustained by Austrian emigrants. Nostalgia for Vienna in the 'good old days' was, understandably enough, an important factor in the intellectual outlook of many such people. And Hofmannsthal, whose earlier work is so much part of late-Habsburg Vienna, was a ready choice. For he seemed to embody so much of what had gone. Add to this the traditional personality-cult of Vienna which to this day dominates the popular view of the *Staatsoper*, the *Burgtheater*, the *Josefstadttheater* and all the other social-cultural institutions of Vienna. For Hofmannsthal has suffered much from friends and acquaintances who 'knew' him. One needs only to look at some of the slighter contributions to Fiechtner's compilation *Hugo von Hofmannsthal: Der Dichter im Spiegel der Freunde* to see this. One doubts, moreover, whether the well-intentioned but so overtly heartfelt impressions of disciples such as Otto Heuschele have done much to help.

These things conspired against Hofmannsthal. The few really considerable labours to reach the essential artist and *Kulturpolitiker*—one thinks of the younger Alewyn, Walter Brecht, Ernst Robert Curtius, Steiner's efforts in the *Corona*, the awe-inspiring and unreadable Naef—could do little against the current. 'Die Zeitläufte,' to paraphrase the villainous Olivier in *Der Turm*, 'waren nicht danach.'

It is against this background that one should judge Fischer's achievement in placing, avowedly in a reading edition as opposed to a detailed critical edition, the whole of Hofmannsthal's work before the public. And one understands, that as a kind of addendum to the edition proper several volumes of letters and fragments are still to come. Realisation of Hofmannsthal's true stature has more than kept pace with the appearance of these volumes, and the day seems to be finally past when a great *Germanist* could say in all seriousness that 'Hofmannsthal is a limited figure'. This was said to the present reviewer not so many years ago.

This happy state of affairs and the flood of work on Hofmannsthal released in the last few years are the signal achievement of the Fischer edition. One needs only to recall the work devoted to individual aspects of Hofmannsthal over the past decade—Alewyn, von Wiese, Rey, Hederer, Mennemeier, Grenzmann, Martini, Requadt, Jens, Kluckholm, Staiger provide obvious examples—to have some realisation of the breadth and variety of his appeal. Like his publisher, Hofmannsthal seems to have returned from exile.

The edition itself has raised many doubts and has set off not a little controversy. Alewyn, in a guarded footnote or two, and Werner Volke (DVJ, March 1958, pp. 305/15), in a headlong onslaught, are two fairly typical examples. A riposte to, and considered defence against Volke's broadside, has been published by the editor himself. (Herbert Steiner:

## Book Reviews

*Zur Hofmannsthal Ausgabe : Bericht und Berichtigung*: Verlag Paul Haupt, Bern 1959). Both attack and defence are conducted with a detail and breadth which are necessarily outside the framework of this review. In general terms one might summarise criticism of Steiner's work as the absence of "learned apparatus" and a certain waywardness in the editing of the texts. Far from the sources as one is, it is difficult to dogmatise on the second point and one hesitates to break a lance for either side. But the paucity of critical notes and generally helpful information is a more immediate problem. So, too, is the fact that in no single volume is there an essay of introduction or 'postlude' of any length. This lack must continue to cause great difficulty to a reader or critical writer wishing to be anything other than an interested spectator. The incredibly involved picture which confronts the optimist hoping to sort out *Der Turm* (bibliography, sources, influence, author's views on and intentions concerning, etc.!) is a doleful case in point. For Hofmannsthal was in any case in some ways an infuriating writer. He hated reading his own proofs; his intellectual constitution was such that he rarely had fewer than three things on the stocks at once; he could not resist the temptation to publish things in fragment form and alter them later if or when they were completed—and they were sometimes altered without being completed! . . . The consequence is that the serious Hofmannsthal scholar (as opposed to the sentimentally vague commentator of Hofmannsthal's *Weltanschauliche Sendung, Barockes Europäertum, Europäische Vatergestalt*, et al.) is, in a word, up against it. Steiner himself, however, is eminently aware of this. There can be few men alive today whose precise factual knowledge of the multi-layered mosaic which made up Hofmannsthal's complex personality equals that of Steiner. He is quite unambiguous about the difficulty when he writes:

In den Besprechungen der einzelnen Bände wurde zuweilen das Wort 'Kritische Ausgabe' oder deren Möglichkeit erwähnt. Ob es einer solchen bedarf? Ist doch das Werk als ganzes noch kaum gekannt. Eine kritische Ausgabe verlangt Herausgeber und Leser, und vielleicht sogar einen Verleger (falls nicht eine Akademie sich ihrer annimmt).

Aus der Arbeit von Martin Stern, einer sorgfältigen Vergleichung der 'Silvia-Handschriften (bei Paul Haupt, Bern 1959) ergibt sich, wieviel Raum die 'wissenschaftliche' Ausgabe auch nur eines Bruchstückes erfordert. Gewiss gilt dies nicht in gleichem Mass von allen Werken, nicht so sehr vom 'Bergwerk zu Falun' als von den Lustspielen und Opern, bei denen mehr als blosser Textvergleich nötig wäre. Hier müssten Einzelstudien einsetzen. Eine kritische Ausgabe würde mehr als 30 Bände füllen. Die von mir betreuten Bände hatten die Texte zu geben, nicht die Textgeschichte.

At least one interested spectator would say rather wearily that at a conservative estimate Steiner's charitably low figure of thirty could be doubled. One notes, too, that Steiner seems to doubt whether even S. Fischer's patience and forbearance are unending.

This seems to be the point: a few years ago Nadler is reported to have answered his critics by the cheerfully positive remark that he had at least given research workers food for thought and theses for half a century to come. We should not for a moment put Steiner's edition alongside such a controversial monument as the *Literaturgeschichte der deutschen Stämme und Landschaften*. Certainly not! But—it was vital that Hofmannsthal be made completely accessible. What he has to tell us is so much of and for this age. And we should be unwilling to wait while a definitive edition

## Book Reviews

produced by a team of experts crawled on to the market. The present reading edition has been fifteen years in the making and this is some sign of what would be involved. Let us have a complete critical edition by all means, and the sooner it is started the better, once the sponsoring body can be found. We may criticise individual aspects of the Fischer edition. But one must remember that this edition is a pioneer in the field. Its virtues (and its lapses from grace) will—to borrow Nadler's idea—be the basis of all future work. And it has brought the whole Hofmannsthal into the open. Hofmannsthal is now seen as a many-sided figure of uncanny perspicience in the cultural-historical sense, one who, with Goethe, saw the 'world behind the world'. He is known these days, moreover, not only as preceptor and prophet but as keeper of what Ernest Robert Curtius calls the 'Heilkräfte der Ueberlieferung'. As critic and essayist he is regarded as an important part of the great author-critic tradition established by Schiller. As aphorist he is scarcely surpassed in this century: the *Buch der Freunde* brings him to the step immediately below Goethe. And so the tale could continue. To have presented this figure for the first time in circumstances, economic and intellectual, which were not always notably appropriate is an achievement which one may not belittle and for which one must be in no small measure grateful.

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BRIAN COGHLAN

MIDDLE AGES—REFORMATION—*VOLKSKUNDE*: *FESTSCHRIFT* for John G. Kunstmann. University of North Carolina Studies in the Germanic Languages and Literatures, no. 26. Chapel Hill (N.C.), The University of North Carolina Press, 1959. pp. xvi + 224.

THIS *Festschrift* is a mighty effort. But it is difficult to know where to begin. *Festschriften* fall as a rule into either of two categories: those which take a restricted field or theme, or those which include offerings about anything and everything. The present volume is outwardly in the former class. When one has progressed into it a little, however, it moves inexorably into the second. For this is as varied a panoply of medievalism, folk-lore and Reformation background as one is likely to find in a whole battery of bibliographies.

It is in no disrespectful sense that one finds this *Festschrift* to be a well-nigh perfect browsing book. For its range is enormous: from the French *fabliaux* (where Professor Holmes entertains us again with his beloved numismatics) to a North Carolinian *Himmelsbrief*, from the possible reasons which King Alfonso X had for defaming the shrine at Compostella to the extremely detailed reflections of George Jones and Edwin Zeydel on the *Waltharius*, and from a late medieval Low German *Weltchronik* to the intricacies of university finances, fellowships and foundations in the fifteenth century.

Is it perhaps fairly typical of contemporary American *Germanistik* that each contribution should be devoted to a highly specialised study? One would like to have evidence now and again that these doughty scholars, whose technique is impeccable, are also masters of the broader perspective. Their trees are wonderful but one has sometimes little idea of where the wood begins and what it looks like.

In such a gay assembly one must presumably stress the highlights. It is with some diffidence that one gives the palm to the one non-American contribution: Helmut Motekat's essay on Duke Albrecht of Prussia as poet of the Reformation. It should in fairness be added that the editors have

## Book Reviews

allowed Motekat much more space than the native contingent. But what Motekat packs into his twenty pages is quite remarkable.

In keeping with the general mood of this volume his essay strikes a nice balance between artistic and social considerations. As one reads Motekat's account of the last Grand Master of the Teutonic Knights one sees much to account for the wonderful sense of religious continuity which can make such a deep impression on the visitor to the far Lutheran north of Germany.

Albrecht's *liedt wie der Hochmeister in Preussen Marian anruft* is given particularly careful attention against the background of Albrecht's dealings with Sigismund I of Poland. There follows a detailed and gently affectionate account of the introduction of the Reformation into Albrecht's territories and his relations with Luther. Motekat devotes a special section (pp. 166-8) to the remarkable *Heiligenlied* which, with a modified first line, could be sung in honour of eighteen different saints. He finds this poem to be the embodiment of Albrecht's personal attitude to the Reformation and concludes (p. 167): 'nicht radikale, theologische Ausschliesslichkeit ist sein Prinzip, sondern ein besonnenes und in seiner Zielbewusstheit bewundernswertes Hinüberführen von dem bisher Geübten zum Neuen.'

There are many such felicities in Motekat's essay. He himself, an alumnus of the *Albertus-Universität* in Königsberg, writes here the best kind of literary history. For he writes with restrained enthusiasm, with the ability to identify himself with his subject but without for one moment allowing his personal feelings to cloud his judgement. The great detail and absence of polemical generalisation mean that his treatment of a unique period in Prussian history must have immense value for students of the German sixteenth century. This essay must not be missed.

Josef Rysan's parallel between Luther's and Hitler's Germany is avowedly sociological. The title of his essay might make one think that we are about to meet another *terrible simplificateur*. Actually this is far from the case. Rysan, one would assume, is more interested in Luther than Hitler and his list of mythological phenomena in the Hitler period will be reasonably familiar to most observers of the National Socialist régime. But it is a useful assemblage all the same. Rysan's account of mythological behaviour as a factor in the Reformation is, on the other hand, quite outstanding. He has a good deal to tell us of the changing attitude of the Devil, of the witch-craze, and the branding of Jews, Gypsies, vagrants and Turks. His style is stained here and there by sociological jargon: collective wishes achieve externalization and relief of emotional tension is achieved by the objectification and projection of collective emotions . . . by the identification of the archetypes of the archenemy and of the messiah! If one can beat one's way out of such bunkers as this, however, the reward is worth the effort.

Such solid contributions to specialised scholarship are ranged alongside interesting sidelights and literary entertainment. Sachs scholars will not want to miss Eli Sobel's careful exposition of the six *Meisterlieder* devoted to the Tristan romance, although exposition triumphs rather at the expense of criticism. But this might be attributed to limitations of space imposed by the editors.

Murray and Marian Cowie provide an excellent example of how much can be suggested by apparently small things. They present a little edition, as it were, of the Alsatian Peter Schott's (1460-1490) two letters to Rudolph Agricola (c. 1442-1485). Schott's elegy on Agricola's death is also included. The young man's letters give a touching picture of the Humanistic spirit, in particular of Schott's desire, with the 'aid of so great a master in



## Book Reviews

*belles lettres*', to free Germany from 'its rude and deeply rooted barbarism'. It is worth mention, by the way, that the notes, which are in very great detail and are actually at least as long as the article, are absolutely indispensable if one is to have full benefit from the letters.

All in all this *Festschrift*, while varying greatly in the scholarly value of its contributions, is a significant—and often diverting—addition to our knowledge of the very large field represented in its title. This breadth and depth are fine manifestations of the respect called forth by Professor Kunstmann's own vast scholarship. If some of the articles in this *Festschrift* strike one as being more suited, perhaps, to a high-level literary *Lesebuch* this should not prevent one from stressing its excellence in other respects as a work of detailed reference and stimulating originality.

University of New England

BRIAN COGHLAN

DAS EDLE IN DER FREIHEIT. Joachim Müller. Leipzig, Koehler & Amelang, 1959. pp. 227.

THE title is misleading. Schiller has suffered a good deal from the cloudy use of such exalted terms as *das Edle*, *das Humane*, *das Ideal*, and the rest. And it is often difficult to prove the writers wrong because the very vagueness of these concepts makes them all things to all critics, until some ill-humoured Anglo-Saxon tries to translate them into exact and homely idiom and to say just what they do mean.

Once one has navigated the title, however, there is nothing of all this in Professor Müller's book. Müller is Director of the Germanistic Institute at the Schiller University of Jena and this would in any case give his views on a bygone professor of his university an interest of their own. Quite apart from this domestic fact, however, Jena has always been of particular interest to Schiller scholars. Its proximity to Weimar has meant that Jena men have often had an opportunity to participate in Goethe-Schiller studies (think only of the incomparable *Archiv* in Weimar) rarely accorded to others.

And so with Joachim Müller: the present collection of essays and addresses obviously springs from a mind saturated with the living spirit, biography and work—in every detail—of Schiller. This comes out clearly in Müller's style. He has, in the main, an easy-flowing manner into which, as if with spontaneous improvisation, he interpolates a fragment from a letter to Körner or a phrase from a little-known treatise or poem:—all without strain or any aura of virtuosity.

The essays themselves cover a wide field and one is not sure that Müller's prefatory claim can be altogether upheld: 'eine Reihe von Arbeiten, die, zu verschiedenen Zeiten entstanden und an sehr verstreuten Stellen gedruckt, doch erkennen lassen, dass sie aus einem einheitlichen wissenschaftlichen Aspekt geschrieben sind und sich gegenseitig ergänzen.' The central unified view of Schiller to which Müller refers is certainly apparent. The range and depth of the works included, however, vary considerably. The three 'occasional' essays illustrate this well enough. First comes the broadly conceived and enthusiastic *Festvortrag: Bürgerfreiheit—Nationalbewusstsein—Menschenwürde in Schillers Werk*. This is very much a 'public' affair, evocative in mood, *pro domo* in tone and as little critical as these joyful occasions seem to warrant. The essay on Schiller's *Lyrische Kunst*, however, was Müller's Inaugural Lecture. It strikes one immediately as maintaining at all points the level required by the moment while avoiding that lapidary *ex cathedra* quality which tends to creep in from time

## Book Reviews

to time when scholars try to be scholarly and 'rise to the occasion' in the same breath.

The third essay in this group is *Der sentimentalische Dichter*. It was written as a memorial tribute for the sesquicentenary of Schiller's death. The method and type of subject here are much less general than *Bürgerfreiheit*, much less detailed than *Lyrische Kunst*, and the total effect is expository rather than critical.

These three examples may serve to show that this book, despite Müller's avowedly unified vision of Schiller, is aimed at several different levels. Thus instead of *einen wissenschaftlichen Aspekt*, illuminated from various angles, one becomes aware of an interestingly three-dimensional effect: a picture in depth, so to speak. It is perhaps only in the natural order of things that one prefers the more detailed studies: those on the tragic conflict in *Maria Stuart*, on *Wallenstein* (notably Müller's sensitive approach to Max Piccolomini); and on the concept of tragedy in *Die Braut von Messina*.

Müller's interest in Schiller seems to be primarily social, a fact which helps him not only to keep his aesthetic feet on the ground but to place Schiller's work in historical perspective. He is particularly successful in the essay on *Wallenstein* in which he achieves a finely balanced three-layered effect: that of the mid-twentieth century looking at the seventeenth century world *aus der ideologischen Perspektive der französischen Revolution und der klassischen Humanität* and asking *ob sie sittlich zugänglich sei*.

Professor Müller is clearly alive to the dramatic and aesthetic felicities of his subject:—witness his brief analysis of Schiller's use of dramatic irony (p. 135). One could wish, however, that such telling remarks were not, as it were, confined to parentheses to quite such an extent. Occasionally the social interest does lead Müller astray. This is noticeable in the essay on *Die Humanitätsidee in der Geschichte* which is devoted to *Don Carlos*. Here a logically built-up picture of Posa and the complex purposes of his friendship with Carlos is slightly dimmed by a series of vehemently old-fashioned onslaughts on Philipp. These remind one rather of Luther tossing his inkpot at Satan in person. There is a note of strain here as Müller hovers between the play itself and Schiller's personal views on tyranny in the attempt to prove that there is nothing tragic in Philipp, *in dem man noch zu sehr das beklagenswerte Opfer des tyrannischen Systems sieht*.

Müller has of course a very difficult task. He himself clearly feels Germany's recent tribulations with particular poignancy. This is scarcely mentioned in any overt sense. But his evident devotion to the *Nation* and *bürgerliches Bewusstsein* betray it at many points. The historical (and political) circumstances in which he writes of Germany's 'national' poet are, to put it mildly, trying. These circumstances may produce the occasional false emphasis noted. But they also seem to have stimulated a particularly *geläutert* and unmetaphysical approach together with an acuity of thought—a *Denkschärfe*—which are highly stimulating. One should read, for example, the closing pages of Müller's thoughts on Schiller as a lyrical poet, in which artistic awareness and relentless social conscience are united in a statement of Schiller's *Ideal*. This kind of controlled enthusiasm for one's theme together with a watchful awareness of its objective value is not encountered so often that one can take it for granted.

## Book Reviews

FRIEDRICH SCHILLER: *Ausgewählte Briefe*, edited by H. B. Garland. Manchester University Press, 1960, pp. XV, 175.

Professor Garland's addition to the *German Texts* series may be regarded as a modest contribution towards tracing, through his letters, a 'non-official' sketch of Schiller's mind and character. The textual material comprises sixty-seven letters selected from the seven bulky volumes of the Fritz Jonas edition, and the selection has been chosen not only for intellectual, aesthetic and critical content, but also for the 'valuable light these letters throw on Schiller the poet and playwright'. They are drawn from almost the entire span of Schiller's letter-writing career, and range from a passionate outburst composed during the latter half of his sojourn at Duke Karl Eugen's Militärakademie, to the last letter Schiller wrote. The arrangement of the correspondence is chronological and Professor Garland has chosen as varied and characteristic a selection as his severely limited scope would allow.

Included are many valuable letters throwing light on Schiller's relationships with those about him (amongst others Duke Karl Eugen, Goethe, Humboldt, the publisher Cotta, Reinwald and Körner), and letters in which the poet and dramatist seems to crystallise his thoughts by discussing them in letters to friends.

The Introduction gives an outline of the main features of Schiller's life, followed by comment on the letters. Here one must remember that the texts are edited for use by undergraduates, but even they may become impatient at being told, for instance, that '... what is lost by the inevitable casualness of epistolary reference is more than compensated by the sense of immediacy, the excitement of glimpsing creation at work. We stand in admiration before this spectacle of artistic integrity and courageous determination . . .'. The introduction reads rather like a potted 'crib' in which the editor allows his own warm enthusiasm for Schiller to lead to extravagances in subjective interpretation.

The explanatory notes, which form a 32-page appendix, are the product of considerable time spent on patient and painstaking scholarship (an expected adjunct, indeed, to Professor Garland's editions!). They are remarkably full, explaining the purpose of each letter where necessary, and elucidating any obscure references or difficult points of language.

University of Canterbury

A. N. BROOKS

GEORG FORSTER: PHILOSOPHISCHE SCHRIFTEN. Mit Einführung und Erläuterungen herausgegeben von Gerhard Steiner. Berlin, Akademie-Verlag, 1958. pp. lxx + 257.

THIS volume in the series *Philosophische Studentexte* is an attempt to revive interest in Georg Forster's philosophy by presenting a selection of his most important minor essays in unabridged and annotated form. Taken mainly from the last six years of Forster's life (1788-1794), these essays represent indeed the most important trend of Forster's writings at that time, dealing mainly with questions of aesthetics and literary criticism, and with the problem of tolerance in religion and scholarship. The last three items show Forster as a representative of Jacobin political thought. The Australian and New Zealand reader will probably regret that comparatively little space has been allotted to Forster's writings on scientific subjects—on geography and exploration, on the biology and ethnography of the Pacific. However, Forster's essays present a unique synthesis of scientific,

## Book Reviews

aesthetic and political thought, and the observant reader of treatises such as *Ueber lokale und allgemeine Bildung* or even essays devoted to purely aesthetic or political questions like *Die Kunst und das Zeitalter* or *Ueber die Beziehung der Staatskunst auf das Glück der Menschheit* will find that nothing of importance in Forster's thought is neglected. The selection is a much needed supplement to the author's most famous work, the *Ansichten vom Niederrhein*—edited in 1958 by Dr Steiner as the first volume of the new Forster-Edition from the Germany Academy of Sciences (East Berlin).

In his preface Dr Steiner emphasizes that the aim of the book is to promote the independent study of Forster's philosophical ideas on the basis of the texts presented,—and therefore he refrains from giving 'a full survey of Forster's philosophy' (p. xxviii). The *Introduction* (pp. vii-lxx) provides the reader with a short outline of Forster's life and of the development of his ideas and deals in more detail with some problems raised by the essays printed in the collection. Dr Steiner discusses the scientific essays of the Kassel and Wilna years which were mainly based on the materials collected on Forster's voyage with Captain Cook and which culminated in the debate with Kant on the origins of human races. Then he deals with Forster's rôle in the development of German aesthetic theories, with his struggle against all forms of despotism and intolerance and, finally, with his attitude to the French Revolution.

Dr Steiner very rightly states that Forster was far from being a 'philosopher' as the word was mainly used in 18th Century Germany. His great importance was precisely that he broke in upon German academic life as an outsider, fitted however, by his whole training and background, by his broad cosmopolitan outlook and fine artistic sensitivity, to become an open-minded and highly stimulating critic of the closed and abstract systems so highly characteristic of a great part of German philosophy and scholarship. Witty essays like *Ueber Leckereien* or *Ueber historische Glaubwürdigkeit* which wonderfully combine extensive learning with an easy, playful and paradoxical style were hardly common in Kant's Germany. However, Dr Steiner's treatment of Forster's ideas is in places seriously limited. The *Introduction* does not, in my view, really succeed in properly assessing Forster's philosophical thought; the fact that Forster dismissed most systematic philosophy as 'abstract speculation' does not excuse the scholar from presenting the relevant philosophical background. Dr Steiner avoids taking a definite stand on—or even mentioning—important questions like Forster's very contradictory attitude to Rousseau, and to theories of evolution and the relationship of individual and species. (E.g. Herder's and Goethe's 'organische Anschauung'.) He does not discuss Forster's extremely interesting evaluation of the function of instincts, passions and even injustice in ultimately promoting enlightenment, 'universal good' and the 'progress of mankind'. (E.g.: Despotism or colonialism necessarily lead to revolt and thus, finally, to freedom, etc.)

In attacking the 'lofty abstractions' of German academic philosophy, Forster's outlook is very strongly empirical; the roots of this empiricism are most probably to be found in his practical experiences as a 'globetrotter' and in the close contact with English science and philosophy which he kept up throughout the whole of his life. I think that the strong 'English' orientation of the University of Göttingen, or Forster's friendship with G. C. Lichtenberg, had a greater impact on shaping his philosophical position than would appear from the interpretation of Dr Steiner. Although the *Introduction* tries to give a sober and matter-of-fact presentation of For-



## Book Reviews

ster's attitude to the French Revolution, the editor fails to show in all their complexity the problems facing Forster. He stresses, e.g., the interest Forster took in winning over the peasants to the side of the Mayence Jacobins (p. lviii),—but does not even mention the tragic dilemma facing Forster after he realised that the French troops were not only liberating but also oppressing and exploiting the population of the Rhineland. The position of Forster in revolutionary Paris was also much more involved and contradictory than appears in Dr Steiner's presentation.

But on the whole, the selection of Forster's 'philosophical' essays will be a very useful book—especially until the whole corpus of *Kleine Schriften* becomes available in the new critical edition of Forster's works. For the time being, Forster's *Philosophische Schriften* provide some basic texts for the study of this extremely interesting writer. They show an altogether unfamiliar perspective of 18th Century German writing and round off our sometimes slightly one-sided knowledge of German Aufklärung, Sturm und Drang and Klassik by presenting some crucial problems of this period through the eyes of a writer who combined discriminating aesthetic judgment with a thorough scientific training and a rare feeling of social responsibility.

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L. BODI

STUDIES IN GERMAN LITERATURE.—No. 1. HEINE: BUCH DER LIEDER, S. S. Prawer, pp. 64;—No. 2. KELLER: KLEIDER MACHEN LEUTE, B. A. Rowley, pp. 47;—No. 3. MÖRIKE: MOZART AUF DER REISE NACH PRAG, R. B. Farrell, pp. 62. London, Edward Arnold, 1960.

THESE are the first three volumes of a new series, *Studies in German Literature* (General Editors: Prof. L. W. Forster and B. A. Rowley); each volume deals with one major work of a 19th Century German writer. The aim as defined on the dust-jacket is 'to present in a convenient form the material which is necessary to an understanding of the work concerned. To this end stress has been laid on a critical approach . . . and upon the inclusion of up to date critical opinions which are difficult for the average person to obtain.' As it is comparatively easy to get hold of 'plain texts' or of older editions of German classics, these essays with their clear-cut structure, their modern approach to the texts and their extremely useful select bibliographies will meet very pressing demands. (Forthcoming volumes include studies on *Hermann und Dorothea* [Prof. R. H. Samuel], Eichendorff and Gothelf.)

The volumes under review use that method of 'explication de texte', of 'Interpretation', that is now the ruling approach to poetry in German literary criticism. They give extremely useful introductions, discussing the main problems of genesis, theme and 'Gehalt', plot and characterization, motifs and symbols, language and style. They are agreeably written, not tiring the reader with scores of learned footnotes, and in general they successfully avoid the involved and somewhat metaphysical reasoning of modern German literary criticism. At the same time it is obvious that the authors of these booklets had to cope with many difficulties arising from the whole method of explication they use quite apart from the more technical problems created by the aims and scope of the series itself. With regard to these, it is presumably the publisher's intention that these books should be 'introductions to works of German literature for sixth formers and undergraduates' which has forced the authors into somewhat oversimplified definitions

of the basic literary terms they use ('style', 'symbol', 'structure', 'Novelle', etc.). And perhaps some statements that look like symbolic interpretations of a merely subjective and impressionistic kind are also to be explained by the inadequate documentation that a lack of space entails. Having to write an introduction to a text not reprinted in the book seems to have caused some uneasiness too, occasionally forcing the author to retell parts of the story. It would have been better to give the texts of at least those shorter lyrical poems which were dealt with in detail, as in the case of the excellent analysis of *Das ist ein schlechtes Wetter . . .* by S. S. Prawer. (op. cit. 54-60.)

It is interesting to note that a complex, involved and multifarious work like Heine's *Buch der Lieder* seems best suited to the critical treatment as defined by the aims of the series. Mr S. S. Prawer gives a first-rate presentation of the main problems of Heine's early masterpiece. In a series of chapters dealing with some of the most provoking and contradictory features of Heine's poetry, he discusses the poet's ambivalent attitudes to escapism and realism, society and the German philistine, religion and blasphemy, sentimental love and 'pan-sexual' nature, and analyses in a highly efficient way the function of Irony, of 'Masquerade' and of the 'Doppelgänger'-motif in *Buch der Lieder*. He gives some excellent examples of the close interrelations between Heine's poetry and contemporary German music. Mr Prawer succeeds very well indeed in achieving the task he set himself in his introduction; his study, he says, 'will attempt . . . to assess Heine's positive achievement and to give some reasons for believing that, with all its defects, the *Buch der Lieder* is the work of a great and original poet as well as one of the most interesting documents of nineteenth-century sensibility.' (p. 10.)

In dealing with Heine's special form of irony, Mr Prawer very rightly states that in Heine's poems 'the parodistic end does not invalidate . . . the seriousness of the opening,' (p. 42.) Heine shows the conflict of poetic illusion and harsh reality in most dissonant contrasts, but presents both as equally strong and important features of human life. This indeed is the attitude that strikes us as being so surprisingly modern in Heine's poetry; but it is this unique interaction of wit and sentiment that—at the same time—brings German Romantic literary theory to fruition. This view of Heine as the last great romantic poet, fulfilling and surpassing Romanticism, as he so often characterized himself, could probably have been emphasized somewhat more strongly by Mr Prawer,—so placing the whole form and genre of the *Buch der Lieder* more fully in its German—and European—context. He gives a good exposition of the skilful arrangement of the particular cycles of the *Buch der Lieder*,—but does not go on to show that the cyclic form of the book with its whimsical, oversensitive byronic hero has strong affinities with the lyrical verse-novels flourishing at that time in most European literatures before the reign of the realistic prose-novel of the later 19th Century. (Pushkin, Lenau, Petófi; Heine—with his later 'versifizierte Reisebilder' like *Deutschland, ein Wintermärchen* or *Atta Troll*.)

The method of 'Interpretation'—in the sense this term is used in modern German literary criticism—may sometimes lead to misinterpretation; it is not always possible to regard a work of literature only in itself without trying to place it in a broader context. This, in my view, can be clearly seen in B. A. Rowley's analysis of *Kleider machen Leute*. His essay gives some of the data necessary to an understanding of the story, and besides containing very interesting remarks and aperçus on the structure and style

of the *Novelle* and the involved relationship between its 'author' and 'narrator' gives a good exposition of the basic theme of 'Sein und Schein'. It is, however, by no means able to give a really adequate assessment of Keller's story. In the first place, Mr Rowley does not view the story as a part of the *Leute von Seldwyla* which is not a random collection of *Novellen*, but forms a full artistic whole. This can be seen in the arrangement of the stories, their common setting in the 'typical' Swiss township of Seldwyla and the general comments given by Keller in his introductions to the two volumes of the work. It is impossible, for instance, to understand the function of the central theme in *Kleider machen Leute*—chance and fate, good and bad luck—without taking into account Keller's reflections on the coming of a new age of speculation and ruthless, fraudulent business-methods as set out in the Introduction to the second volume, or without being acquainted with the main traits of character, the manners and customs of the citizens of Seldwyla as the reader has come to know them in the course of the stories preceding our *Novelle*.

In the second place, I do not think we can understand *Kleider machen Leute* without seeing its specific Swiss qualities. Cursorily, Mr Rowley mentions Swiss pedagogic traditions (p. 14) or enumerates some elements of Swiss dialect in Keller's use of language (p. 16 f.); he fails, however, to go any further. When Keller wrote *Kleider machen Leute* he was *Staats-schreiber* of Zürich, one of the highest civil servants of a prosperous republic, with a keen interest in social and political matters. For him—as for most Swiss writers of the 19th Century—literary creation was much more strongly associated with a feeling of political, moral and educational commitment than it could be for any German (*Reichsdeutsch*) writer in the decades after 1848. Even the structure of the story (deception—unmasking—reinstatement; p. 10) has close parallels to some of his other works which quite explicitly serve to express his belief in the basic soundness of Swiss life, such as, e.g., the early sonnet *Jeder Schein trügt* or the solution he finally gave to *Der grüne Heinrich*. Categories used to describe the 19th Century German scene cannot be assumed to fit Switzerland with its strange mixture of patriarchal traditions and modern democratic institutions; it seems not quite right to talk about 'the cautious consolidation of the Biedermeier burgher' in connection with the *dénouement* of the *Novelle* (p. 43):—and Seldwyla was by no means typical, in Keller's eyes, of the 'rigorously ordered bourgeois world.' (p. 35.)

Professor R. B. Farrell's book, the third volume of the series, presents a sensitive and delicate analysis of Mörike's beautiful *Mozart auf der Reise nach Prag*. The author discusses the genesis of the work, and then defines the theme of this 'Künstlernovelle' as follows: 'Life at its brightest and most glorious destroying itself by its very intensity!' (p. 21.) In a chapter on *Structure*, Prof. Farrell interprets the setting of the *Novelle* in 'place and time', discusses its major characters and the fine use of symbolic suggestions and overtones in Mörike's art: 'the symbols convey their associations in [a] gentle, veiled and discreet way and without detracting from the realism of the foreground.' (p. 26.) In his interpretation of the subsequent 'sections of the work' all significant movements of the *Novelle* are discussed. A last chapter deals with the *Style* ('form' and 'diction') of the story, drawing parallels between Mozart's musical and Mörike's narrative style, with its sensuous, playful and impromptu character and its close relationship to the *Arabesque*. The syntax of the *Novelle* shows many affinities to that of Mörike's poetry, evoking feelings of vagueness, receptiveness and passivity promoted by 'the relative unimportance of the verb' and 'the desire for

## Book Reviews

evocation of a scene rather than the emphasizing of action.' (p. 58.)

As to the whole arrangement of Professor Farrell's stimulating essay it could probably be said that the chapter discussing 'the sections of the work' is somewhat disproportionate to the whole, occupying more than a third of the book. Some of this space might have been used to give us more information about the place of *Mozart auf der Reise nach Prag* in German and European literature. There is, for instance, the exciting question of the function of the Don Juan motif in 19th Century literature, and the relation of Mörike's Novelle to the treatment of the Don Juan (and, sometimes, also the Mozart) theme by authors like E. T. A. Hoffmann, Grabbe and Lenau, Byron, Pushkin and others. It would have been very interesting to hear more about the indebtedness of Mörike to German Romantic literary theory in the description of the phenomenon of synaesthesia, or the concept of the close connection between night, death and artistic creation.

Although there were many problems and difficulties for the writers of the first *Studies in German Literature* to overcome, these essays will be extremely useful and no one would disagree with the publisher's saying that 'this series should be of great value to the student, teacher and amateur of German literature.'

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L. BODI

THE ERA OF GOETHE: Essays presented to James Boyd, Oxford, *Blackwell*, 1959, pp. 193.

A Festschrift is always in intention a collection of essays which do honour to the recipient; it can be in practice a dump for unwanted material or the grave of a vitally important piece of work. The honour bestowed by a Festschrift is all the greater, when essays contained in it are really important contributions to knowledge, and not the result of a desperate last-minute attempt to provide something for the occasion, nor articles written long before and rescued from oblivion to fill up a few pages of the volume. Yet if the Festschrift contains nothing in the latter categories, but is in fact a collection of valuable essays, then the research-worker may regret that useful material is presented in a compendium volume, which will make later reference more difficult.

This volume of essays presented to James Boyd on his retirement as Taylor Professor of German Language and Literature in the University of Oxford avoids this dispersal of material, which is not infrequently a characteristic of the Festschrift, in that the contributions are interrelated by being all devoted to aspects of German literature in the era of Goethe. A biographical sketch as preface reminds us that studies of Goethe formed the major part of Boyd's published work, and it is therefore most fitting that Goethe should be the focal point of these essays. Of the eleven contributions, four deal directly with aspects of Goethe's work, and a fifth, by Professor Purdie, gives an account of *Hebbel's Portrait of Goethe*, but this naturally reveals far more about Hebbel than about Goethe. The remaining six essays all deal with figures contemporary with Goethe; Wilhelm von Humboldt, Pestalozzi (or rather his immediate ancestors), Herder, Hölderlin, Mörike and Carlyle. Consequently there is no more unity than is suggested by the title, and the balance seems weighted against Goethe. This partly explains why only two of the contributors manage to refer to Boyd's work in their essays.



## Book Reviews

In keeping with the current trend, the emphasis is on textual criticism. Professor Pascal draws some extremely interesting conclusions from a consideration of *Some Words of Pylades in Iphigenie* IV, 4, and Mr Barnes supports his demonstration of ambiguity in the action and conclusion of *Die Wahlverwandtschaften* by continual close reference to the text. Professor Mason's *Conjectures Regarding Goethe's Erdgeist*, although likewise based on textual study, are not so convincing. Not only does the essay seem markedly fragmentary and the intention set out on p. 85 unfulfilled, but in refuting Rickert's conception of the 'Erhabener Geist' monologue, for example, Mason seems (p. 91) to quote lines which support Rickert rather than his own 'cult of earthliness' interpretation. Similarly Professor Peacock's observations on *Die natürliche Tochter* sometimes seem to be questioned rather than affirmed by the quotations (cf p. 131). Perhaps the best examples of interpretation on the one hand, and use of text to support an argument on the other, are Professor Williams' essay *Day and Night Symbolism in some poems of Mörike*, and Professor Stahl's contribution on *Hölderlin's Idea of Poetry* respectively.

It is unfortunate that present-day printing costs should impose on such an interesting collection of essays the handicap of a price which is almost prohibitive for the ordinary individual.

University of Otago

E. W. HERD

RUNES, *an Introduction*, Ralph W. V. Elliott. Manchester University Press, 1959, pp. 124.

THE author says in his Preface that he aims at nothing more than an 'introduction to the study of runes in general and of English runic inscriptions in particular'. He concentrates as far as possible on established facts rather than speculative theories.

Dealing with the question of the origin of runic writing, which is the subject of his first chapter, he discusses briefly the three main theories. The first tries to prove that the runic *futhark* (alphabet) is derived from the Greek alphabet; the second traces it to the Latin alphabet. But although several runes show a striking resemblance with Greek or Latin letters, there are a large number that cannot be explained satisfactorily in this way. The third theory points to more striking resemblances of the runes with North Italic alphabets. An examination of some of these alphabets alongside of the runic *futharks* tends to confirm this. But many details remain obscure.

It will be remembered that Tacitus (*Germania*, ch. X) relates how two thousand years ago Germanic people used to cast lots, to foretell the future. On a white cloth they threw at random small pieces of wood, each marked with a sign. After invoking the gods, a priest or the father of the family took up three pieces, one at a time, and interpreted the signs on them. These signs may have been runes. They may also have been other signs to which certain magic powers were ascribed. Such signs have been discovered as rock-carvings, drawings on amulets, etc.

On page 64 the author gives an illuminating reproduction of a large number of such signs: all sorts of circles reminding us of ancient sun-cults, swastikas, crosses, rough sketches of twigs or even trees, suggesting fertility-cults, parts of the human body such as hands or feet, tools, weapons, etc. Originally these signs or symbols had no phonetic meaning, although they may have been associated with names such as *sun*, *man*, *tree*, *foot*,

etc. Several of them have found a place in the runic alphabet. Some seem to have been adopted to signify the initial sound of the name of the object represented. Thus a straight upright stroke with two small side-strokes or a circle at the top may signify *man* or the consonant *m*.

It is supposed that some Germanic tribe, on its wanderings south, whilst in contact with North Italic people in Alpine regions, may have become acquainted with a North Italic alphabet, adapted it to its Germanic tongue, and included some of the magic signs referred to above. Thus may have been evolved the Germanic *futhark*.

The common Germanic *futhark* consisted of 24 runes, divided into 3 sets of 8 runes each, called *attir* in Icelandic. The absence of curves and horizontal lines was obviously due to the initial use of wood as material on which the runes were written, i.e. 'carved'. Runes could be read from right to left as well as from left to right just as could the North Italic inscriptions; they could also be written 'boustrophedon', i.e. the way a field is ploughed.

The author explains very clearly the 24 runes of the common Germanic *futhark*. He shows how this *futhark* was reduced to 16 runes in the Danish and the Swedish-Norwegian *futhark*. The Scandinavian *futhark* took a new aspect by the addition of points or dots which gave a more accurate indication of the pronunciation. In England the Germanic *futhark* introduced by Anglo-Saxon settlers was adapted to the needs of the Old English sound-system. This involved the addition, first of four new runes to the common Germanic *futhark*; during a later phase five more runes were added, making a total of 33 runes used in Northumbria about the year 800.

Runes served the most varied purposes. Originally they seem to have been used chiefly in religious practices or ritual and magic: to cure diseases, to obtain victory in battle, etc. Weapons, amulets and other objects were inscribed with runic symbols or words to secure the desired result. A very common practice was to inscribe stone monuments with the names of important people to perpetuate their memory. Weapons, tools, ornaments, etc. often were inscribed with the name of the maker or the owner.

Viking expeditions and settlements resulted in the spread of runic inscriptions as far as the Mediterranean, Russia and even Iceland and Greenland. With the introduction of Christianity the Latin alphabet soon replaced the runes in most cases. But some fine Christian monuments bear runic inscriptions, notably in Great Britain. Thus the author reproduces extensive extracts of the Old English poem *The Dream of the Rood* inscribed in runic characters on the beautiful Ruthwell Cross in the Ruthwell Church Dumfriesshire. It is true that this cross was removed from the parish church and broken into several pieces as a result of an Act of Assembly of the Scottish Church in 1642 directed against 'idolrous monuments'. But the remains have since been gathered and repaired as far as possible, and the cross returned to the church, where it can still be admired today.

It is also reported that in the 17th century, at a time when witch-hunting was at its height in many countries, people were burned in Iceland because runes were found in their possession.

R. W. V. Elliott's *Runes* is a model of clarity and accuracy. Apart from the numerous carefully drawn runes in the text, the book contains 47 beautiful photographs of monuments and various objects with runic inscriptions. Those interested could not wish for a more practical and reliable introduction to this fascinating subject.

University of Melbourne

A. LODEWYCKX

EYRBYGGJA SAGA, translated by Paul Schach and Lee M. Hollander. *University of Nebraska Press*, 1959, pp. xx + 140.

THIS latest addition to the series of translations of Icelandic literature sponsored by the American-Scandinavian Foundation is the first full English version of *Eyrbyggja saga* since that of William Morris and Eiríkur Magnússon in the Saga Library nearly seventy years ago. Professors Schach and Hollander believed a new rendering was called for because 'our conceptions of the style of . . . a translation' (p. vii) have changed since 1892.

It is unfortunate that they have chosen so explicitly to invite comparison with the work of their predecessors.

In some respects their book is a great improvement on the older one. Both the standard editions of *Eyrbyggja* postdate the Saga Library version, and the new translators, as they acknowledge, owe much to the learning of their compilers, Gering and Einar Olafur Sveinsson, both in their footnotes and in Hollander's introduction. And where Morris and Magnússon supplied only a small, somewhat congested map, this version has as endpapers a large, clear one.

But otherwise both the student and the 'general reader' will be better served by Morris and Magnússon than by Schach and Hollander. This is true most of all of the style of the two versions. Certainly, in his prose, Schach spares us the factitious archaisms in which Morris delighted; but Morris did not always archaïse, and was the master of a spare, vigorous prose admirably suited to rendering the sagas. Schach, on the other hand, writes a dull, wooden, stilted, genteel prose which gives a less accurate impression of the original than Morris ever did. One sentence, which is typical, indicates briefly what I mean. In chapter 18, when Þorbjörn comes to Mávahlío to accuse Þórarinn of stealing his horses, Þórarinn replies: 'Þá viljum vér pverliga þessar rannsókna synja, ef þér vilio aflaga eftir leita ok upp hefja.' Schach has: 'In that case we will flatly refuse permission for this search if you mean to initiate and conduct it in illegal fashion.' And Morris: 'Then will we flatly refuse this ransacking, if ye begin and carry on the search lawlessly.'

Altogether, there is a curious inconsistency in Schach's method of translation. Whereas he constantly uses inflated phrases such as 'procure a vessel' for *fekk . . . skip*, he retains the many short sentences of his original, unpleasantly staccato though they are. In rendering an already disjointed and badly constructed saga like *Eyrbyggja*, the reverse policy would have better helped the puzzled reader: to combine sentences by relating them logically, and to re-paragraph, on the one hand, and on the other to employ a plainer, sparer vocabulary. As it is, Morris's archaisms are less distracting than the jerkiness and pomposity of Schach's version.

In other respects, too, the new translation is inferior. Professor Hollander supplies an interesting introduction, but it is a pity that he did not—for the reader's sake—incorporate into it an outline of the plot of this singularly episodic saga such as he has since partially supplied (in *J.E.G.P.*, LVIII, 1959, 222-7), whether his conception of its structure is correct or not. Again, where Morris and Magnússon assisted the reader by providing genealogical tables and indexes of names and places, these are lacking from the present volume. This is unfortunate, because the saga has many characters, many of them have closely similar names, and family relationships alone make some of the action intelligible.

In general, it is hard to see who will benefit from this new translation. The 'general reader' will surely find it hard, if not impossible, to make head or tail of the story without these aids; the student of the sagas will not be

## Book Reviews

happy with a version which preserves the original's disjointedness but loses its blunt vigour.

Australian National University

G. K. W. JOHNSTON

TOLSTOY. Theodore Redpath, London. *Bowes & Bowes*, 1960, pp.126.

THIS book on Tolstoy is meant primarily as a study of Tolstoy the thinker and of Tolstoy's theory of the world which had so much influence on European thought in its day and ever since. It is designed to form one of the series of short books described as *Studies in Modern European Literature and Thought* under the general editorship of Erich Heller. Dr Redpath has therefore concentrated mainly on those views of man, art, religion, society and morals which Tolstoy came to hold after his conversion—in a word it is less a book about Tolstoy or Tolstoy's thought as a whole, than about the genesis and nature of the doctrines which we think of as *Tolstoyan*. The book begins with a chapter outlining, analysing and criticising these Tolstoyan doctrines of non-resistance to evil, universal love, non-participation in the forms and procedure of the state, the views on science, art and sexual life which Tolstoy held so strongly at the end of his life. It continues with a chapter admirably reviewing Tolstoy's literary works with a succinctness, justice and erudition that would be hard to equal. It goes on to a short account of Tolstoy's life in so far as it throws light on the development of his ideas and on the relation of his ideas to his fiction. The Conclusion attempts a general assessment of Tolstoy as thinker and a writer of fiction. A valuable Biographical Chronicle, list of chief works with dates of publication and a bibliographical summary particularly valuable for its review of recent work on Tolstoy in Soviet Russia complete the book.

All this is admirable and the book bears the stamp of thorough and sensible scholarship, a modesty of intention and a willingness to admire and understand which have often been lacking from works on Tolstoy.

Dr Redpath is less happy as a critic. He points out fairly enough the defects of Tolstoy's theories, the element of the crank in the man that made him so often carry a theory to absurd extremes. In a sense Dr Redpath does Tolstoy no less than justice. But it is easy enough to point out, for example, the weakness of the Tolstoyan argument that because government employs force and often employs it to selfish ends, therefore all government is evil, and that no government at all combined with mutual love and forgiveness will do all that man needs here below for a life worth living. Dr Redpath scores an easy victory when he points out that Tolstoy's view that the state does nothing to protect the poor against the rich, and *can* do nothing by its very nature, is belied by the modern welfare state. So one can point out the defects of the society of Wise Horses in *Gulliver's Travels*, while missing the main point of Swift's tremendous attack on social man.

What Dr Redpath tends to miss in Tolstoy is the truth in his vision of man and society, a truth which is not affected by the fact that Tolstoy the crank could apply this truth perversely, clumsily or absurdly. He does Tolstoy the justice of taking him quite seriously and attempting to answer him seriously, but he often does so at a trivial level which fails to do justice to what lies behind the surface absurdities and contradictions. He sometimes makes Tolstoy, in spite of his attempts to restore a serious view of him as a thinker, look like a fool. As Isaiah Berlin points out in his



## Book Reviews

perceptive study of Tolstoy's view of history, *The Hedgehog and the Fox*, Tolstoy was a deep and original thinker. We cannot simply write off his theories as superficial or intellectually feeble. If he appears to treat history with a violently doctrinaire, violently anti-historical and unhistorical theory of human action, we cannot simply shrug it off by pointing out that history is not like that and that Tolstoy should have known it. We should at least explore the possibility that Tolstoy is presenting us with another view of the world than the historical one: a view in which the historical aspect is subsumed under another view altogether. And this of course is what Tolstoy himself pointed out in his comments on *War and Peace*. The denial of all power of determination to generals and kings may be demonstrably absurd. Tolstoy may, as Dr Redpath claims, even have falsified history to show Kutuzov as a 'passive' general. But the general picture of the diminishing degrees of freedom of choice and action from the private individual up to the public man is both just and beautifully demonstrated. And the very core and kernel of the novel is in the picture of the determination of the great majority of individuals by the historical process which they can only deal with by becoming 'fixities and definites', and the revelation of the odd occasional process by which 'negative capability' enables the rare individual to escape from historical determinism. Dr Redpath's book is intended as no more than a guide for the general reader so that it is perhaps unfair to demand too much of a work that in any case does much to demand serious consideration of Tolstoy as a thinker. For example, there is the admirable defence of the works published after Tolstoy's conversion, especially *Resurrection*. But when all is said the author appears to have missed some of the greater issues which make Tolstoy's vision of life so terribly dangerous, precisely because it is so true. He is Nietzsche's dangerous philosopher who exposes and thereby weakens the illusions and pretences which alone make society possible. Dr Redpath's amiable countering of Tolstoy's blows at the Czarist state with confidence that the social service state is different, sometimes gives the impression of having missed the point.

Canberra University College

A. D. HOPE

SELECTED POEMS FROM *THE GODDESSES*. By Kuo Mo-jo. Translated by John Lester and A. C. Barnes. *Foreign Languages Press, Peking*.

THE People's Government of China has, for ten years now, encouraged the introduction of Chinese literature to English readers through translations, issued by the Foreign Languages Press in Peking. There has also appeared in English since 1952 (at first quarterly, then bi-monthly and, in the last two years, monthly) the magazine *Chinese Literature* which consists very largely of translation of writing past and present.

Three main categories appear to have been established among these translations of Chinese literature. The first, by far the largest in volume, is that of translations of recent and current works which treat themes connected with the War with Japan, the Civil War, the Korean War, the struggle for land-reform and various other features of the social upheaval which has taken place in China since 1949. Such works, written in accordance with the principles of socialist realism, may seem somewhat lacking in individuality to the foreign reader. Secondly, there are translations from 'the classics' in which are included both works in the classical literary

## Book Reviews

language and works in the popular *pai-hua* ('plain speech') language of past centuries. It is in this category that the weakness of the 'translation to order' method is most apparent. For China has followed her Soviet mentor in the introduction of the production line technique in the literary field. (Current Chinese books record the number of thousands of characters which they contain). These translations of Chinese 'classics' may sometimes be described as adequate; they can never be called inspired. The nature of the original will chiefly determine the comparative success or failure of the translation. Thus the translation (*The Scholars*, 1957) of the 18th century novel *Ju-lin wai-shih* in which incident and situation are important, was tolerable, while the translation (1953) of the *Li Sao and Other Poems of Chu Yuan* where sensitivity for language is of first importance, resulted in disaster. Thirdly, there is the interesting category, labelled 'Writings of the Last Generation'. In many cases the authors are still living, but the works in this group, generally written during the 20s and 30s of this century, tend to show an ideological imperfection from the present government's standpoint.

These translations of poems from Kuo Mo-jo's anthology *The Goddesses* (*Nü-shien*), first published in 1921, fall into this third category. Kuo Mo-jo, born in 1892 into a landlord family in Szechwan, now, as President of the Chinese Academy of Sciences and Chairman of the All-China Federation of Literary and Art Circles, occupies a leading position in the educational and cultural world of People's China. His position is certainly deserved for the lively contributions he has made both to literature and to historical and archaeological scholarship over the past forty years. *The Goddesses* belongs to the time before Kuo was influenced by Marxism, when, in his own words, 'he stood for individuality and freedom', and to the period immediately following the Literary Revolution of 1917 in which Chinese writers cast off the bonds of classicism and tradition and began a search for new forms and modes of expression. Kuo's poems are among the earliest attempts in 'new poetry'.

Kuo, in the brief preface which he contributes to this English translation, writes: '*The Goddesses* can be compared to a cicada newly emerged from the chrysalis of the old society as well as of the traditional Chinese poetry . . . More than thirty years have passed by and China has undergone another great transformation. *The Goddesses* is now but an exuviae (*sic*) of the cicada . . . In my view poetry is the music invoked from men's hearts by the age in which they live. Viewed as literature, these poems may disappoint the reader. Let them rather be taken as recordings of the age in which they were written.'

All literature must to some extent be the recording of the age in which it is written, and the period of *The Goddesses* has a particular interest. For here we have in Chinese poetry a plunge from a native tradition in which form, content and manner of expression had been matters of complete certainty for many centuries, into a situation where no single feature was fixed, and where, besides, material might be drawn from the whole world known to the poet. That the poet's pen should never err in this new medium, would indeed be a subject for wonder, and errors are certainly to be found in *The Goddesses*. There is *Venus* in which a Western school-boy might feel pride but hardly a grown poet—

I would compare your enchanting lips  
to a wine-cup.

I would be intoxicated time without number  
from its inexhaustible nectar.

## Book Reviews

I would compare your breasts  
to two grave mounds.  
Were we two to sleep in these graves  
our blood would change to sweet dew.

No improvement of Lester and Barnes' translation, which throughout often unnecessarily introduces clichés and reminiscences from English, can save this poem.

Yet here there is as well the simple *Whampoa Estuary* which successfully translates the traditional poetic achievement into a modern form—

Peaceful village,  
land of my fathers,  
so green those grassy shores,  
so straw-pale the flow of water.  
I lean on the rail and look into the distance:  
level like an ocean is the great country,  
but for a few heaving willows  
not a hill or cliff hinders the view.  
The little craft ride up and down,  
the men might be in a dream.  
Peaceful village,  
land of my fathers.

To attempt to make good my criticism of Lester and Barnes, I should like to give my own (literal) version—

Peaceful village!  
My parents' land!  
Bank grasses so fresh green!  
Flowing water this soft yellow!  
Leaning on the ship's rail, I gaze into the distance,  
The level earth is like an ocean,  
Except for some fresh green willow-waves,  
There are no mountainous barriers at all.  
The little boats toss on the waves,  
The men just as in a dream.  
Peaceful village!  
My parents' land!

However they are translated, such glimpses of modern Chinese literature while it retained literary rather than political objectives, are worth having.

University of Sydney

A. R. DAVIS

TE REO. Proceedings of the Linguistic Society of New Zealand, Volume I, 1958. *Department of Romance Languages. University of Auckland.*

THE Linguistic Society of New Zealand was formed at Auckland University in April 1958 'to promote and pursue the scientific description and study of the evolution and structure of languages'. This first number is made up of summaries of discussions and addresses given during the first year of the new Society's activities. It is cyclostyled, but the excellence and variety of the matter presented should bring sufficient support to enable subsequent issues to be printed.

It is gratifying to find pride of place given to *Linguistic Geography*, a

## Book Reviews

subject which not so long ago was almost unknown in this part of the world. This took the form of a panel discussion under the chairmanship of Professor A. C. Keys, who gave, together with Dr K. J. Hollyman, an historical survey and a good description of this important aspect of linguistic research. Reference was also made by Dr E. A. Sheppard to the initial work done on English, and finally Dr B. G. Biggs examined the Polynesian area and described the preliminary study of Maori dialects now being undertaken.

Attention must be drawn to the excellent holdings of the University of Auckland Library, which was able to loan for display such valuable works as the *Atlas Linguistique de la France*, the *Sprach-und Sachatlas Italiens und der Südschweiz*, the more recent Walloon atlas and the new French regional atlases so far published, devoted to the Lyonnais, Gascony, and the Massif Central.

Next comes a summary of a paper read by Mr P. D. Hanan on the *Characteristics of Chinese*. This address dealt with three topics: Chinese grammar, the system of tones, and the Chinese script. In these notes only the first is considered. 'It seemed pointless to describe the tones in print, and the character script might have been difficult to reproduce.' Rather an understatement! Judging by the clear description given of the most arresting features of Chinese, this must have been a very striking address. No reference is made here to the phonetic poverty of the language, which to some extent explains some of its peculiarities, but it must be assumed that this was discussed together with the system of tones.

Two complementary talks on the history of modern linguistics are next summarized, one concentrating on European developments by Dr Hollyman, the other on American by Dr Biggs. In his survey Dr Hollyman illustrates strikingly how 'the basic concepts of linguistics have tended to follow those of other sciences' by contrasting the diachronic historical-comparative method of the 19th century with de Saussure's synchronic structural approach, and he goes on to describe the more recent trends in linguistic research. In the second paper Dr Biggs shows that the direction of American research is to some extent the outcome of problems raised by the study of unfamiliar languages. Hence the stress on synchronic descriptions and the importance of formal rather than semantic criteria. But while it is clear that such formal analysis is indispensable for example as a basis for machine translation, the deliberate elimination of all semantic features must repel many linguists.

The final summary in this excellent little journal is of a talk by Mr T. Crawford on *Burns's Language*. After a searching examination of Burns's poetic vocabulary Mr Crawford reaches the conclusion that this language is 'a careful selection of words and idioms that tends, except in special circumstances, to exclude the local and the parochial'. Only a minute fraction of the Scots words in Burns's poetry belong specifically to the South-Western speech, and even some of these may prove to be more widely distributed than is now thought. But this must await the results of the present survey of Scottish dialects.

University of Melbourne

P. CANART

A SHORT HISTORY OF ITALIAN LITERATURE. J. H. Whitfield. Penguin Books, 1960, pp. 303.

THE first word to be said of this book is one of welcome. Even if it were not well done, and in fact it is, all one's instincts would be putting out anti-



cupatory signals of approval before one started to read. This is doubtless a dangerous situation for the reviewer but understandable, for this work provides something that has been completely lacking until now, an English survey of Italian literature which is a readable and scholarly guide and is easily available. We have had, it is true, the recent work by the American, E. H. Wilkins (odd that Professor Whitfield does not include it in his bibliography) but this did not provide the stimulus that the present book offers. This publication is, in short, something of an event for Italian studies.

Professor Whitfield has written widely on Italian literature (books on Dante, Petrarch, Machiavelli, Leopardi) and is well equipped for his task. The book's scholarship is uniformly sound. I think he has set out principally to give us a *connected* narrative and he has largely succeeded. Although he may at times reject specific judgements of De Sanctis, and in so doing he is fully in line with contemporary Italian criticism, he has written a book in the tradition of the great 19th century *Storia*: he has tried to see Italian literature as a whole. The merits of this method are seen most clearly in those passages where a transition has to be effected between one author or period and the next. See for instance the skilful handling of the Middle Ages to Renaissance problem and the precise but not overstated analysis of the differences in attitude of Dante and Petrarch towards antiquity. Occasionally one does find an overstraining: to state that Fogazzaro's comic observation 'Seems to presage a little the infusion of Pirandello into the solemnity of Verga's realism', is to see connecting links which have a very tenuous justification.

But at the same time as he weaves his patterns of analogies and linkages, Professor Whitfield is not afraid to measure his authors against a standard of values which is other than purely (or merely?) aesthetic. It is here that he is at his most questionable and his most stimulating. Ariosto's humanising and civilising of the romance of chivalry, for instance, becomes a positive value, something good in itself. Similarly he gives much weight to the importance of Leopardi as a thinker and states that the poet can offer 'the vital touchstones for our own problems and attitudes in a world which has exaggerated the outlines of the one he knew', and this critical attitude will inevitably lead him to see *La Ginestra* as the greatest of the *Canti*, 'for those who do not wish to limit poetry to verbal music'. And is it perhaps a lack of sympathy with Manzoni's attitudes and beliefs that makes the section on that author somewhat disappointing? Professor Whitfield's courage of conviction does have its dangers. Fogazzaro, with all his faults, stands 'though cloudily, for human and social good', and this gives him at least one merit 'in front of' the pessimism of Verga and the aestheticism of D'Annunzio—which seems to me an illustration of the difficulties involved in basing the evaluation of an author on agreement, or otherwise, with his intentions. But this is a criticism of detail, as would be also the game of pointing out names that have been omitted, for omissions are inevitable in a short history and no-one faced with the task of selection could expect every reader to agree at all points with his choice. What matters is that Professor Whitfield has written a thoroughly sound book and moreover one which will compel the reader's agreement or disagreement: which is infinitely preferable to providing nothing to argue about at all.

One is left at the end, after so much to admire, with only one major disappointment, namely the author's decision to stop at Pirandello and to venture no further along the erratically marked tracks of contemporary literature. One can only too readily sympathise with the very sound reasons

## Book Reviews

that must have led to this. But it still seems a pity. At no time, perhaps, since the Renaissance, has Italian writing evoked so much interest beyond the country's borders as at present. Even if Professor Whitfield had found himself forced to become less of an historian and more of a chronicler some account of the moderns would have been desirable in a book which deserves to reach the widest audience.

University of Melbourne

C. A. McCORMICK

ETTERNO SPIRO. A STUDY IN THE NATURE OF DANTE'S PARADISE: Sheila Ralphs. *Manchester University Press*, 1959, pp. vii + 46.

THIS essay is concerned with certain key image-words in the *Paradiso* and is principally an attempt to understand more precisely what significance Dante attributes to them. Miss Ralphs considers, to instance a few examples, words like *luce*, *spiro*, *riso*, *piacere*, *splendore* and sets herself the task of clarifying their theological basis. It is a wholly legitimate line of enquiry; with Dante, of all poets, imagery has a firm intellectual root. One of the main points of reference is the doctrine of the Trinity. Thus the word *riso*, for instance, is related particularly to the Holy Spirit, to the 'joy' which is especially proper to that Person of the Trinity.

It could hardly be expected that an essay which is based on such intangibles as the Trinity of Dante's light imagery should be easy to follow, but the effort to do so is not lost and this reader attributes his difficulties far more to the matter than the manner. But Miss Ralphs does occasionally lead the reader to make a comparison between her own explanation and Dante's original words. Once or twice I found myself bogged down with the English and jumped on to the quoted lines of Dante to find it all a good deal clearer: which is perhaps hardly surprising; Dante, after all, is Dante and has said these things better than anyone else. There is also the occasional statement of the obvious and one wonders if it has been induced by the fascinations of the scholastic syllogism—'Where human will acts in contradiction of God's it cannot be just'. Or, an obvious more obvious still—'Fortitude is the virtue of strength and resolution'.

But these are matters of minor detail. What this essay does offer, and it is worth offering, is a greater insight into the pattern and meaning of Dante's Paradise imagery, particularly of the light imagery which is so much the 'stuff' of the *Paradiso*, and it is thus an invitation to a closer reading. From that reading should come a fuller understanding of the *Paradiso* not as theology but as poetry. Miss Ralphs has not taken us all the way but she has provided us with some of the materials for our own use.

One minor point. In her third chapter Miss Ralphs considers particularly some of the basic 'light' words, *luce*, *raggio*, *splendore*. One might have expected some specific treatment also of the word *lume*. Does Dante use it merely as an alternative for *luce* when imaging God, or has it, in some cases at any rate, a more precise function? For what it is worth, I have noted in the final Canto that God is referred to five times as *luce* (ll. 54, 67, 83, 110, 124) and three times as *lume* (ll. 43, 110, 116) but the only very tentative differentiation I can suggest is that *lume* may refer particularly to God as the *source* of light—

Indi all'eterno Lume si drizzaro . . . (l. 43).

But this is a fine and uncertain distinction not obviously supported by all

## Book Reviews

the other examples. If Miss Ralphs is intending to pursue her investigations this might be a line worth following, even if (as I suspect) the conclusion would be negative.

University of Melbourne

C. A. McGORMICK

THE MEDIEVAL SCENE. G. G. Coulton. *Cambridge University Press*, paper back reprint, 1959, pp. ix + 163.

ANGLO-SAXON ENGLAND. P. Hunter Blair. *Cambridge University Press*, paper back reprint, 1959, pp. xvi + 382.

AMONGST its first selection of paper back books, the Cambridge University Press has re-issued two volumes which presumably are regarded as essential for the student of medieval affairs. It is therefore not irrelevant in considering these works to ask what merits they possess that they should be chosen for cheap republication.

Why Professor Coulton's *The Medieval Scene* should have been thus favoured is difficult to understand, since it first appeared thirty years ago and plainly bears the marks of topical presentation as an expanded series of broadcast talks. Briefly and selectively Coulton deals with English social conditions and developments after the Norman Conquest, but at times—as in speaking of trade, monasticism or politics—he ranges far more widely over Europe and earlier medieval centuries. Much in this remains suggestive as well as readable and it may be that this re-issue is directed to capture the enthusiasm of the student new to medieval topics, and nothing more. But the faults inevitable in a popular work of such size and date seem glaring today. The merest introduction is given to a host of subjects where discussion is all too often chronologically confusing; in certain respects—concerning for instance medieval political theory or the pattern of economic development—Coulton's views need revision; and his generalisations, frequently brilliant and illuminating, are also on occasion dangerously misleading. In his discussions he repeatedly refers to longer, more scholarly examinations in his other works. It would seem more valuable to have reprinted cheaply one of these studies rather than 'an informal introduction' which in size and method—as well as price—must compare unfavourably with other available paper back volumes on the Middle Ages.

Mr Hunter Blair's *An Introduction to Anglo-Saxon England*, first published in 1956, is more obviously relevant and substantial as a handbook for the students of history, literature and archaeology alike. The author's aim is limited—to provide a general study of English developments from the end of Roman occupation to the Norman Conquest—and he endeavours to present the conclusions of other scholars in an attractive, informative survey. An historical outline, given in two opening chapters, is followed by sections ranging over literature and scholarship as well as ecclesiastical life, civil government and economic affairs. Footnotes are used sparingly, but the treatment throughout is shown to be grounded upon the most recent researches, whilst bibliographies appear at the end of the book to encourage the student in the further pursuit of individual topics. Mr Blair succeeds in writing a stimulating, well-balanced work in which he puts together a scholastically sound account of Anglo-Saxon England and at the same time contributes positively to an understanding of its society and history. He significantly stresses the Scandinavian background for English affairs; he surveys with skill and learning the literary achievements of the

## Books Received

period; and his discussion at every point of archaeological and philological evidence—together with a fine use of maps and illustrations—reveals how all disciplines can and should be brought together for constructing an intelligible picture of Anglo-Saxon society.

By separating narrative from his consideration of particular aspects of pre-Conquest England, Mr Blair makes the way easier for the non-historian, but appears at times to give too little weight to the factor of historical development over seven centuries. His emphasis upon the continuing 'British' character of society through the Anglo-Saxon age is perhaps too pronounced when other views need stronger statement. Moreover, his refreshing concern with the earlier centuries of the period leads to a somewhat inadequate treatment of England after the reign of Alfred. But these are minor blemishes in a work indispensable today for meeting the needs of all who approach the study of Anglo-Saxon England, whatever may be their particular interests.

University of Canterbury

G. H. W. PARKER

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## A.U.L.L.A. SEVENTH BIENNIAL CONGRESS

CHRISTCHURCH, JANUARY 18-24, 1961.

THE seventh biennial congress of the Association is to be held at the University of Canterbury, Christchurch, New Zealand, from Wednesday, January 18, to Tuesday, January 24, 1961. The Congress will be divided initially into five sections—Classics, English, French (with Italian), Germanic Languages and Russian, and arrangements can be made for special sections in Linguistics and in Science Languages as required. The Convenors of Sections (with Deputy-Convenors chosen from New Zealand members where required) are as follows:

<i>Classics</i>	Mr Kenneth Quinn (University of Melbourne). Professor D. A. Kidd (University of Canterbury).
<i>English</i>	Professor C. J. Horne (University of Adelaide). Professor E. A. Horsman (University of Otago).
<i>French</i>	Professor D. P. Scales (Australian National University): Professor A. C. Keys (University of Auckland).
<i>Germanic Languages</i>	Dr H. Wiemann (University of Melbourne): Associate-Professor J. A. Asher (University of Auckland).
<i>Russian</i>	Dr D. V. Grishin (University of Melbourne).

In each of the larger sections about 12-13 papers have been offered.

*Guest Speaker.* The Association has invited to the Congress as guest speaker Sir Frank E. Adcock, a senior fellow of King's College, University of Cambridge, who is spending some time in New Zealand as a Visiting Lecturer of the University of Otago. Sir Frank has agreed to advance his itinerary a few weeks for the purpose of attending the A.U.L.L.A. Congress. He was from 1925-1951 Professor of Ancient History in the University of Cambridge and Joint Editor of the *Cambridge Ancient History*. He is to

## *Association Notes*

1  
speak at one of the 'open' sessions of the Congress (open to the public) on *Character Drawing in Greek Prose Literature*.

On the Sunday of the Congress delegates will undertake an excursion to Akaroa, which is situated on French Bay in Akaroa Harbour, about 60 miles south-east of Christchurch, and was settled by a private French Company in the 1840's. Records of the early days of the colony and various relics of the settlement will be available for inspection by courtesy of the County Council.

The final event of the Congress will be the dinner at Elizabeth House, in Christchurch, in the evening of Tuesday, January 24.

# AUMLA INDEX Nos. 13-14, 1960

## ARTICLES AND NOTES

- Chisholm, A. R. *Mallarmé's Edens*, 13, 3.  
 Chisholm, A. R. *Mallarmé's Edens* (II) 14, 3.  
 Elkin, P. K. *Leonard Woolf's Masterpiece*, 13, 46.  
 Jones, T. H. *The Disposition of Images in Browning's 'The Ring and the Book'*, 13, 55.  
 Leopold, Keith. *Some Problems of Terminology in the Analysis of the 'Stream of Consciousness' Novel*, 13, 23.  
 Leov, Nola M. *La Religieuse, 1760-1780*, 14, 23.  
 Quinn, Kenneth. *Syntactical Ambiguity in Horace and Virgil*, 14, 36.  
 Ryan, L. J. *Hölderlin's Hellenism*, 14, 51.  
 Turner, G. W. *On the Origin of Australian Vowel Sounds*, 13, 33.  
 Wilkes, G. A. *The 'Wisdom' Sequence in Brennan's Poems*, 14, 47.

## BOOK REVIEWS

- Bald, R. C. *Donne and the Drurys* (W. Milgate), 13, 77.  
 Battestin, Martin C. *The Moral Basis of Fielding's Art: A Study of Joseph Andrews* (H. Winston Rhodes), 13, 81.  
 Blackall, E. A. *The Emergence of German as a Literary Language* (J. A. Asher), 13, 99.  
 Blair, P. Hunter. *Anglo-Saxon England* (G. H. W. Parker), 14, 117.  
 Bowers, Fredson. *Textual and Literary Criticism* (J. C. Garrett), 13, 79.  
 Boyd, James (Festschrift). *The Era of Goethe* (E. W. Herd), 14, 106.  
 Brower, R. A. *Alexander Pope: the Poetry of Allusion* (P. Dixon & Kenneth Quinn), 14, 66.  
 Buckley, Vincent. *Poetry and Morality* (H. Winston Rhodes), 13, 85.  
 Chambers, R. W. *An Introduction to Beowulf* (G. H. Russell), 14, 73.  
 Clarke, M. L. *Classical Education in Britain 1500-1900* (R. Johnson), 13, 72.  
 Cohen, Marcel. *Notes de méthode pour l'histoire du français* (K. J. Hollyman), 13, 92.  
 Coulton, G. G. *The Medieval Scene* (G. H. W. Parker), 14, 117.  
 Cox, C. B. & Dyson, A. E. (ed.). *The Critical Quarterly*, Vol. 1 (1959) nos. 1 & 2 (P. Dixon), 13, 82.  
 Elliot, R. V. W. *Runes* (A. Lodewyckx), 14, 107.  
*Essays and Studies of the English Association* (E. A. Sheppard), 13, 85.  
 Frey, John R. (ed.). *Schiller 1759-1959: Commemorative American Studies* (Brian Coghlan), 13, 96.  
 Farrell, R. B. *Mörike: Mozart auf der Reise nach Prag* (L. Bodi), 14, 103.  
 Garland, H. B. (ed.). *Friedrich Schiller: Ausgewählte Briefe* (A. N. Brooks), 14, 101.  
 Gardner, Helen. *The Business of Criticism* (W. A. Edwards), 14, 76.  
 Garland, H. B. *Schiller Revisited: Some Bicentennial Reflections* (Brian Coghlan), 13, 96.  
 Garner, Ross. *Henry Vaughan: Experience and the Tradition* (A. W. Rudrum), 14, 71.  
 Gilman, Margaret. *The Idea of Poetry in France* (A. R. Chisholm), 14, 86.  
 Goldsmith, U. K. *Stefan George: A Study of his Early Work* (R. B. Farrell), 14, 90.  
 Gougenheim, Georges. *Dictionnaire Fondamental de la Langue Française* (K. J. Hollyman), 13 89.



## Index

- Gowan, C. D'O. *The Background of the French Classics* (R. T. S.), 14, 82.
- Hamilton, W. (tr.). *Plato: Gorgias* (B. F. Harris), 14, 60.
- Hartley, Anthony (ed.). *Penguin Book of French Verse: 4. the XXth Century* (V. B. Smith), 14, 84.
- Hartman, Geoffrey. *Malraux* (W. Pollard), 14, 83.
- Holmes, Martin. *Shakespeare's Public: The Touchstone of his Genius* (K. Maslen), 14, 68.
- Hotsen, Leslie. *Shakespeare's Wooden O* (F. H. Mares), 14, 69.
- Keys, A. C. *Antoine Bret: The Career of an Unsuccessful Man of Letters* (Robert Shackleton), 13, 90.
- Klapp, Otto. *Bibliographie der Französischen Literaturwissenschaft* (R.T.S.), 14, 87.
- Kunstmann, J. G. (Festschrift) *Middle Ages—Reformation—Volkskunde* (Brian Coghlan), 14, 97.
- Lawler, James R. *Form and Meaning in Valéry's 'Le Cimetière Marin'* (J. Norman Suckling), 13, 87.
- Lester, John & Barnes, A. C. *Selected Poems from 'The Goddesses' by Kuo Mo-jo* (A. R. Davis), 14, 111.
- Lough, J. *Introduction to 18th Century France* (I. H. Smith), 14, 85.
- Luck, George. *The Latin Love Elegy* (Kenneth Quinn), 13, 72.
- Morison, W. A. *Studies in Russian Forms and Uses—The Present Gerund and Active Participle* (R. G. A. de Bray), 13, 105.
- Müller, Joachim. *Das Edle in der Freiheit* (Brian Coghlan), 14, 99.
- Niklaus, R. & T. Marivaux: *Arlequin poli par l'amour* (N. M. Leov), 14, 82.
- Osman, Neile. *Modern English* (G. W. Turner), 14, 80.
- Prawer, S. S. *Heine: Buch der Lieder* (L. Bodi), 14, 103.
- Pocock, L. G. *Reality and Allegory in the Odyssey* (P. R. C. Weaver), 14, 61.
- Quinn, Kenneth. *The Catullan Revolution* (J. P. Sullivan), 13, 70.
- Raabe, Paul (ed.). *Schiller: Die Horen* (Richard Samuel), 13, 102.
- Ralphs, Sheila. *Eterno Spiro: A Study in the Nature of Dante's Paradise* (C. A. McCormick), 14, 116.
- Redpath, T. *Tolstoy* (A. D. Hope), 14, 110.
- Rowley, B. A. (ed.). *Keller: Kleider machen Leute* (L. Bodi), 14, 103.
- Sanders, Joan. *The Devoted Mistress: A Life of Louise de la Vallière* (Bronnie Treloar), 13, 94.
- Schach, Paul & Hollander, Lee M. *Erbyggja Saga* (G. K. W. Johnston), 14, 109.
- Scales, Derek P. *Alphonse Karr, sa vie et son œuvre (1808-1890)* (I. H. Smith), 13, 93.
- Schadewaldt, W. *Hellas und Hesperien* (M. B. Benn), 14, 88.
- Sembdner, Helmut (ed.). *Berliner Abendblätter* (Richard Samuel), 13, 101.
- Sembdner Helmut (ed.). *Heinrich von Kleist* (Richard Samuel), 13, 100.
- Shepherd, Geoffrey (ed.). *Ancrene Wisse* (Lenore Harty), 13, 75.
- Steiner, Gerhard (ed.). *Georg Forster: Philosophische Schriften* (L. Bodi), 14, 101.
- Steiner, Herbert (ed.). *Hugo von Hofmannsthal: Gesammelte Werke in Einzelausgaben* (Brian Coghlan), 14, 94.
- Stone, B. (tr.). *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* (G. H. Russell), 14, 74.
- Stopp, F. J. *A Manual of Modern German* (J. A. Asher), 14, 93.
- Te Reo. *Proceedings of the Linguistic Society of New Zealand. Vol. I* (P. Canart), 14, 113.
- Thys, Walter (ed.). *De Kroniek van P. L. Tak* (R. P. Meijer), 13, 103.

## Index

- Waldron, T. P. (ed.). *Gil Vicente: Tragicomedia de Amadis de Gaula* (B. W. Ellis), 13, 104.  
Whitfield, J. H. *A Short History of Italian Literature* (C. A. McCormick), 14, 114.  
Wigmore, Lionel (ed.). *Span: An Adventure in Asian and Australian Writing* (H. Winston Rhodes), 13, 83.  
Williamson, G. A. *Josephus: The Jewish War* (G. V. Sumner), 13, 106.  
Woodcock, E. C. *A New Latin Syntax* (Kenneth Quinn), 14, 63.



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